

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

IN Hab 2⁴ we read in our English Version, 'The just shall live by his faith.' This sentence is to be found in A.V. in the almost identical form, 'The just shall live by faith,' in two Pauline passages (Ro 1¹⁷, Gal 3¹¹), and also in He 10³⁸. It may be useful and instructive to consider the meanings of the sentence. We shall find that the language of the English version of the Habakkuk text represents the meaning of the text as quoted by St. Paul, but that the original meaning in Habakkuk is more exactly reproduced by the author of Hebrews, and that the original meaning carries the best message for our modern time.

Habakkuk possessed a reflective mind. He is called in the Bible Habakkuk the prophet, but his attitude towards God was not the characteristic prophetic attitude. The prophets, speaking generally, were spokesmen of God to Israel; but Habakkuk was, in the first instance at least, a spokesman of Israel to God; baffled and bewildered by the ways of Providence, he was actually moved, like Job, to interrogate the Almighty. And what was the particular aspect of Divine providence that troubled him? It was, as the Cambridge Bible has it, that 'God looked on in silence while men perpetrated their deeds of violence upon the earth.'

In the dramatic dialogue between God and His prophet with which the Book of Habakkuk begins, the prophet raises his problem. But the Divine answer, that the Chaldeans are being raised up to

punish and destroy the wrong, does not satisfy him. Why should God employ as the instrument of His judgments a nation so fierce and rapacious as the Chaldean? So the prophet awaits God's further answer. And in God's own time the answer comes. The excesses of a people like the Chaldeans carry ruin within them; pride, arrogance, and cruelty have no lasting quality. But moral security is their lasting heritage who trust in God and yield Him steadfast loyalty: 'The just shall live by his faith.'

A better rendering of the Hebrew is, 'The righteous shall live by his faithfulness.' That is to say, the faithfulness or fidelity of the just or righteous man shall be unto him as a principle of life. If it was not a real solution of the problem raised by the Hebrew prophet, it was at least a solution which embodied a true interpretation of the genius of the Hebrew race. What is written of Moses—that 'he endured as seeing him who is invisible'—was true of many in Israel, before and after Moses. Indeed, it was by their native faithfulness, their steadfastness, their loyalty to Jehovah, amid perplexity, adversity, and trial, that the people of Israel survived the changeful fortunes of their history.

The Pauline passages above mentioned bring before our eyes another figure than the patient watchman in his tower, waiting for the message wafted to him at last on the winds of heaven. We

do not mean the eager, restless figure of St. Paul. We mean the figure of one who in the after days caught again the Pauline spirit and sent it aflame through our Western world. At the foot of the *scala santa* we see him kneeling—a young monk, in appearance earnest and devout, with the marks of monkish zeal upon his frame. And now we see him climbing the holy stairs on hands and knees, at every step a prayer. But suddenly he stops half-way, then rises to his feet, and walks slowly down the steps again. Through the chambers of his brain the words had rung forth, 'The just shall live by his faith.'

In catching up this ancient phrase of Habakkuk's, St. Paul had missed its exact meaning. For the phrase came to him not from the Hebrew original but through the Septuagint, and there faithfulness (פִּיטוּס) is rendered by *πίστις*, which may mean faithfulness, but which also means faith in the sense of an act of belief. And it was upon this narrower meaning of the Greek word that St. Paul fastened, thus supporting evangelical doctrine by a form of words derived from Habakkuk. And in this Luther followed St. Paul. If the just shall live by faith, if it is by a believing acceptance of the grace of God in Christ that a man is justified in God's sight and receives the forgiveness of sins, then why this pilgrimage to Rome, why this act of penance?

Thus our prophet's words, which in their original significance may be taken as a motto of the Hebrew race, may be also taken, as applied by St. Paul, as the motto of evangelical Christianity. But, further, the author of Hebrews, whose use of the words resembles the original rather than the Pauline use, helps us to translate them into our modern life. For the world in which we live is not so theological a world as Luther's was, and the old battle-cries of the Churches do not sound so loudly in our ears; and the best application of the text in these times consists in taking up the old problem of life which troubled the ancient prophet and carrying it, as indeed the author of Hebrews does, to its deeper and more personal—as distinguished from national—issues.

We are often perplexed at the ways of God with the nations, but we are also perplexed, and much more than were the men of old, at the ways of God with our own souls. Sometimes our difficulties are practical ones, sometimes they are speculative. What should be our attitude? Despair? Impatience? God forbid! Instead of being impatient before life's problems, let us turn to the strengthening message of God's prophet in Israel. Take your stand upon the watch-tower. Occupy your post upon the rampart. Be faithful, patient, vigilant, ever ready for the answer which by God's grace shall come. Let patience have her perfect work. Though the vision tarry, wait for it.

'There are not, and in the very nature of the case there cannot be, any scientific or philosophical difficulties in the way of believing in prayer exactly as the simplest piety does, except such difficulties as arise out of an assumed determinism; and such an assumption makes not only prayer, but all moral and religious conceptions of life, absolutely impossible.' This bold assertion is made and strongly supported in a chapter on 'The Problem of Prayer' which forms part of *Studies in Religion*, by Mr. Henry BERT, M.A. (Sharp; 5s. net).

Can the assertion be upheld? Can simple believing prayer be justified on scientific and philosophical grounds? If so, then many Christians 'professing themselves to be wise have become fools' in restraining and renouncing prayer. For undoubtedly in our time prayer has been restrained or wholly renounced in deference to what were conceived to be the demands of modern science. 'The assumption is always that the modern conception of the universe, which is expressed in phrases like the uniformity of nature, the universality of law, and so forth, makes it impossible to believe in prayer as really affecting anything in the physical universe, though it may possibly have some sort of effect in the psychical region.' In other words, you may pray for spiritual blessings, perhaps also for health (for the body is influenced by the spirit), but it is hopeless and absurd to pray

for good weather. This position has been endorsed by no less an authority than William James, and seventy-five per cent. of students who answered a questionnaire on prayer expressed the same view.

This view appears, on examination, to be beset with fallacies. It divides the universe into two halves, the physical and the spiritual; the former under the dominion of law, the rigid laws which rule physical antecedents and consequences, while the latter, the spiritual half of the universe, is assumed to be under the dominion of—what? It cannot be ruled by chance, for in that case prayer could effect nothing. But, if it be ruled by law, then the operation of law must be as rigid in the spiritual as in the natural realm. 'The fact that the universe is governed by law, if it forbids physical results to follow from prayer, equally forbids spiritual or moral results to follow from it.'

But, further, let us look more closely at this conception of natural law which has obsessed the modern mind, and become a bogey to drive timid Christians from their knees. For one thing it wears a mantle of authority to which it has no just claim. Most unfortunately the same word 'law' is used to express, as Lord Oxford pointed out, 'both the command of a sovereign authority and the generalisation of a Newton or a Darwin.' The two are quite distinct, and it is a piece of sheer anthropomorphism to speak as if natural laws have some sort of authority or power of enforcing themselves. They are simply observed sequences, expressions of the fact that certain things happen in certain ways. As to what makes them happen so, or happen at all, natural law can tell us nothing.

Moreover, the description of the laws of Nature as fixed laws is singularly delusive. It gives the impression of invariable sequence—B follows A inevitably, and no other result is possible. This, of course, is right enough so long as we consider the sequence in the abstract. This is what would happen if the law existed and operated by itself. But the point which is often forgotten is that 'in the life of the universe no natural law ever does actually exist or operate alone; it is always con-

ditioned and often suspended or superseded by the existence and operation of other laws.' In fact, speaking more strictly, the same event never recurs, for, as modern physics is now so strongly insisting, no two events in the universe are precisely similar. The fixity of the law or the uniformity of Nature, as we perceive it, is really due in large measure to our imperfect perception. 'It is merely a kind of statistical average, an abstract and approximate formula—something which does not actually exist in nature, but which our minds import into our conception of nature, and which we find extraordinarily convenient in use, as a kind of working principle.'

In such a fluid world, amid the myriad interactions of its forces, and the incalculable possibilities of permutation and combination, there is ample room for Divine action in answer to prayer. Of course if our final philosophy be determinism that makes an end not only of prayer but also of free will and of everything having the name of religion and morality. But, if there is a God at all, 'He' can order the limitless interactions of natural laws and natural forces, without any exercise of miraculous power, so as to produce whatever result He wills, and, if He so wills it, the result for which we pray. If man can rearrange the interactions of physical laws so as to produce different results (and that is what all human activity amounts to), surely God can do the same on the infinite scale?

But another objection has been raised by timid apologists, who are really seeking a religious sanction for conceding what they conceive to be the scientific objection to prayer. Is it not foolish, they say, or even blasphemous, to think of prayer as altering the will of God? Now, no doubt, the will of God, taken in the general sense of His universal purpose of good, cannot be altered. But to think that the will of God implies that every event is rigidly and unalterably fixed is to deny the reality of human freedom and make an end of all morality. 'It is fundamental to all religion and all morality to believe that man should be able, within limits, to do a thing or not to do it; to do the good deed that is in accordance with the will of God, or to do the

evil deed that is the sheer denial and defiance of the will of God, to fulfil or frustrate the will of God, in the Apostle's phrase.' If, then, we believe that God's will can in some real sense be thwarted by sin, so that it has to be wrought out in some other way because of man's defiance, surely it is reasonable to believe that in an opposite direction God's will may be influenced by prayer, and be enabled to accomplish itself more readily through man's desire and trust. 'Is it to be thought that I may divert the course of events in an evil sense by my sin, and that I may not divert it in a good sense by my supplications, so that by a man's sin, but not by a man's prayer, the general purpose of God may be fulfilled along a different line of happenings? That is a very insolent anomaly, one would think, for any religious mind to accept.'

There is urgent need for a reinvigorated faith in the power of prayer. The human spirit will refuse in the end to be satisfied with a conception of prayer which makes it a mere auto-suggestion, while it leaves the whole of life in the grip of inexorable fate. If it comes to be thought that all that a man's prayer can do is to persuade his own will into a more submissive acceptance of what is irrevocably destined, and what neither his most earnest supplication nor anything else in the world can change in the smallest degree, we do not believe that prayer will continue for long to hold a place in the life of men; and when prayer is no longer believed in as a real activity of the spirit which has real results not only in the sphere of self, but also in relation to the universe and to the will of God, religion will not long survive.'

Jeremiah is coming into his own. In February we called attention to Professor WELCH's scholarly study of the prophet; and, by a singularly happy coincidence, that book has been followed up by one of a very different type which admirably supplements it. That was pre-eminently a scholar's book, this is pre-eminently a preacher's book, by one of the most distinguished of American preachers, the Rev. Charles E. JEFFERSON, D.D.;

it is entitled *The Cardinal Ideas of Jeremiah* (Macmillan; 8s. 6d. net).

Dr. JEFFERSON brings to the elucidation of the prophet's message a contagious and overwhelming enthusiasm for the man and his ideas. He describes the prophet as 'one of the greatest men who ever lived,' 'one of the greatest men God ever sent into this world,' 'one of the greatest thinkers of all time,' 'the man who, with a solitary exception, had a greater genius for hoping than any man who ever lived.' The Hebrew prophets, he tells us, were the deepest thinkers the ancient world produced, 'and of these none is deeper than Jeremiah.'

To the uninitiated this may sound like the language of extravagance, but the ten chapters of this very striking book adequately substantiate this high claim. Dr. JEFFERSON is well aware that most of the good people who sit in our pews will rub their eyes at such an estimate of the prophet; but that is because they know nothing about him, and that again is partly because they do not read his book and partly because they have never been trained to read it. 'In our Sunday-school days we were not instructed in the ideas of Jeremiah. It never occurred to us that he had any ideas.' Those who by chance do read his pages 'almost go to sleep, because it all seems so tame and dull; but if you only had the information and the imagination, you would hear the hissing of the red-hot lava which runs in boiling streams below the surface of the tranquil language of this ancient book.'

But it must not be supposed that Dr. JEFFERSON's enthusiasm is indiscriminating. His aim, he tells us, is to make Jeremiah live, and he does this by painting the real man, warts and all, a man who was tempted and tried in all points like as we, and much more sorely than most of us, and who sinned as we do. He had his moods; he could be cynical, he could be vindictive, he could be sceptical, and Dr. JEFFERSON does not hesitate to say that he 'sometimes talked like a fool. He was a wise man most of the time, but sometimes he was exceedingly foolish. His life was so full of suffering that sometimes he felt it was unendurable.' He felt it and

he said it; he reproached God with having made a fool of him.

This candour is part of the charm alike of Jeremiah and of his most recent interpreter. There are few things more absorbing in this absorbing book than the chapter on 'Prayer as Conversation with God.' Every one who knows his Jeremiah is astonished at the prophet's prayers, with their imprecations, their recriminations, their challenges of God, whom he compares to a treacherous brook and to waters that are not sure. Dr. JEFFERSON explains that Jeremiah talks thus to God, just because God is so real to him. He was the great Friend, to whom in his unspeakable loneliness the prophet took all his troubles and before whom he poured out all his heart, charged as it so often was with perplexity and indignation.

He 'had all the boldness of a child, he blurted out things to God which shock us.' Among his first recorded words stands the confession, 'I am a child,' and a child, in one sense, he remained to the end: hence the naïveté of his prayers. This is very illuminating, and this chapter is full of illuminating things. It suggests that the difficulty many of us experience in praying is 'because we look upon prayer as a speech, a little speech to God.' It has nothing of the joyous spontaneity of conversation. But prayer is essentially dialogue rather than monologue. 'Jeremiah said something to God, and God replied. God said something to Jeremiah, and Jeremiah responded. We too often make prayer monologue. We do all the talking.' Our prayers, so far from being irksome and monotonous, might have all the freshness and variety of Jeremiah's, if, like him, we looked upon prayer as a daily conversation with God.

But the book deals more particularly with the ideas of Jeremiah, because, in the view of Dr. JEFFERSON, the supreme need of the Church to-day is for more thinking. Men will pray, sacrifice, give, do anything rather than think, and religion without thinking must degenerate either into convention or superstition. He even makes bold to say that 'you cannot be a good Christian unless you think.'

Where, then, did Jeremiah get those ideas which are of such superlative importance to the world and the Church to-day? To say that they were 'revealed' to him does not carry us far. Dr. JEFFERSON reminds us that the revelation of the meaning of the world comes to the man with the eyes that have looked at it observantly and with the mind that brings questions to it. One of the perennially perplexing problems, for example, is that of reconciling the Divine Sovereignty with human free will: Jeremiah's solution of that problem is enshrined in ch. 18, 'one of the most interesting episodes in the Bible,' and 'in that conception of the Divine Potter and the human clay you have one of the great achievements of the human intellect,' which 'will probably remain forever the most satisfying image which man can form of the Divine Sovereignty in relation to the freedom of the will.' The clay may be refractory, but the potter does not destroy it: he simply crushes it into a shapeless mass, and proceeds to make 'another vessel.' So with the Divine Potter. And this lesson came to Jeremiah not by way of some magic inspiration, not even in the Temple, but in a pottery! He used his eyes and put his mind behind them, and then and thus came the revelation.

Another of the dominant ideas of Jeremiah is that the individual is the key to the world-problem. The Corporation, the Union, the Press, the Church, the 'masses'—the very words suggest how steadily the individual is receding from the view. In this, as in so much else, Jesus was like Jeremiah—He had 'the individualizing eye': His parables are concerned with 'a certain man,' 'a certain householder,' etc. In His messages and His personality Jesus so strikingly recalled Jeremiah that some of His contemporaries were constrained to say, This is Jeremiah come back from the dead. What a tribute to Jeremiah!

One of the most searching chapters discusses the question of conflicting loyalties and throws welcome light on the problem of the conscientious objector—a type which Dr. JEFFERSON thinks will be much more widely represented, should there ever be a

'next' war. In this connexion 'no other book in the Bible has so much help to give us as this ancient Hebrew volume.' In exhorting the soldiers not to fight, and in encouraging his king and his countrymen to surrender to the enemy, Jeremiah was undoubtedly guilty of treason; yet no man loved his country or sought her welfare more passionately than he. A traitor, yet a patriot, the truest patriot of them all. 'He resisted the politicians, who were a coterie of reckless jingoes, a bunch of hundred-percenters, who were always chattering about national honour, and knew nothing of national wisdom.'

Like Jeremiah, Dr. JEFFERSON is not afraid to speak the unpalatable truth to his countrymen. While his indictment of modern society generally is severe, his criticism of America is particularly unsparing. Our civilization may go the way of other civilizations which have vanished from the earth. 'We only know that it cannot go on as it is. It is too dishonest.' The most damning indictment of popular government is that 'it takes forever to get anything worth while accomplished, and when it is done it is often done in an extravagant and bungling manner.' But the most drastic treatment is meted out to America. 'We are a spectacle to the nations because of our gullibility.' The tragedy of America is that 'there is so much chatter and so little accomplished.' 'We Americans are probably the most superficial of all peoples.' 'In certain circles a clergyman is denounced as a traitor if he dissents from any opinion expressed by the officers of the navy or army'; and 'our intellectuals, so-called, are too often pessimists and cynics.'

This is plain speaking, and yet the book is essentially a heartening book. The preacher reminds those who are depressed by the widespread indifference to traditional religious observances that 'religion to its contemporaries has always seemed to be going.' It must have seemed so to devout Jews of the first century and to devout Catholics of the sixteenth. Religion was indeed going, but it was 'going on and going up'; and as it was then, so it is now: only 'we twentieth-

century people are religious in a different way,' and each generation has the right to be religious in its own way.

The book bristles with points that will be greedily appropriated by the preacher. Here is one: 'the world needs two things, light and salt—light to keep it from tumbling into a ditch, and salt to save it from putrefaction.' But the real strength of the book is its vivid portraiture of Jeremiah, the man and his message. In language of delightful and almost colloquial, but never undignified, simplicity, it brings that ancient world before us and makes us feel how modern it all is. Dr. JEFFERSON'S ambition, he told his hearers, was to stimulate their minds and to induce them to make an honest effort to master the cardinal ideas of this mighty Man of God. He has been singularly successful.

A question of supreme importance for faith is the value of St. John's Gospel as an historical narrative. It is to-day common ground that there is a large element of interpretation in the Fourth Gospel, and that this has coloured to some extent the narrative, and to a large extent the report of our Lord's words. But the issue goes deeper. Can we accept 'St. John' as an authentic narrative written by John or at least containing his memories? There is a widespread tendency to depreciate its value as history and to take our picture of Jesus Christ solely from the Synoptists, to regard the Fourth Gospel as a theological treatise in narrative form, containing incidents moulded, or indeed created, in order to express the writer's view of Christ, and so to ignore the contribution which St. John offers to the Christian faith in Christ.

There have been voices of protest against that conclusion. Among these was a remarkable deliverance of the late Canon Scott Holland in a book published in 1923. And the Canon's plea for a more positive estimate of the Fourth Gospel has been reinforced by the Dean of Wells, Dr. J. Armitage ROBINSON. He has republished, with enlargements and additions, some lectures which

were delivered in Westminster Abbey in 1907, under the title *The Historical Character of St. John's Gospel* (Longmans; 3s. 6d. net). The book has two qualities which will commend it to the inquiring mind. It is the book of a competent scholar, familiar with the region in which he is moving, and it is marked by a most persuasive sincerity which never overpresses an argument or a fact. And both qualities make its contention an important one for those who are anxious to know the truth.

Dr. ROBINSON states frankly the considerations that bear against the historicity of the Gospel. These are of two kinds. One is general. It is the contrast between the whole representation of the ministry of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels and in St. John. There is a contrast of atmosphere, a contrast in the teaching of Jesus, and finally an extraordinary diversity in the scenes of our Lord's ministry. When you pass from St. Mark to St. John you are in a different world. It is a totally different picture of the Lord. The other fact that seems to tell against the narrative worth of St. John is the series of discrepancies between it and the earlier Gospels. The most important of these is the conception formed of Christ Himself by the disciples and by their Master. In the earlier Gospels the disciples do not recognize Jesus as Messiah till late in the story, in St. John they accept Him as Messiah from the outset.

These are serious facts and seem to tell strongly against the traditional view of the Fourth Gospel. What has Dr. ROBINSON to say in reply? The outstanding difficulty is that the Fourth Gospel deals in the main with a ministry in Jerusalem, whereas the others state that the ministry was in Galilee and only bring Jesus to Jerusalem for a brief space after the ministry in Galilee was closed. But is it not in the highest degree improbable that Jesus worked only in Galilee? He must have attended the Jewish feasts. Is it credible that He never spoke to His people at the centre of their faith?

It is to be noted that St. John represents such visits to the feasts as the occasions of our Lord's ministry at Jerusalem. And it is extremely likely,

a priori, that such visits and such a ministry did take place. How otherwise can we explain the words that occur in the Synoptists, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children . . . and ye would not'? These words are inexplicable except as a reminiscence of works done and words said in pursuance of a saving mission in the city. If this be so, is it not highly probable that these two ministries went on side by side? The Galilean ministry might leave its mark on a narrative drawn up by a Galilean apostle like Peter, while the Jerusalem ministry would appeal to one who had special links with the city, and who desired to relate such incidents as illustrated the truths which he wished to enforce.

Such is the line of argument urged with great force by Dr. ROBINSON, as it had been urged by Canon Scott Holland. The difference in atmosphere and in the teaching of Jesus is accounted for by the fact that the aim of the later writer is to interpret as much as narrate, and also to supplement what had been previously told. The most serious difficulty, however, is the contrast we find between the attitude of the disciples to their Master in the earlier Gospels and in the later one. Dr. ROBINSON does not meet this difficulty with any marked success. May it not be true, however, to say that the disciples eagerly accepted Jesus as the promised Messiah at first, as very many others were prepared to do, but that as the days went past His actions and words so contradicted their conception of Messiah that the identification faded away in their minds? And may not St. John, looking back after many years, have put into the first eager acceptance more than it actually contained?

In any case, Dr. Armitage ROBINSON has done us all a great service by the republication of these lectures. Many people have quietly accepted the adverse verdict about the Fourth Gospel, and this has meant an impoverishment of their faith and of their conception of our Lord. Dr. ROBINSON has given solid ground for a reconsideration of their verdict, and his own firm confidence in the historical worth of the Gospel will do something to restate it in the confidence of others.

Books that have influenced our Epoch.

Canon Streeter's 'Reality.'

BY THE REVEREND CANON OLIVER C. QUICK, M.A., CARLISLE.

WHETHER or not we agree with the main argument and conclusions of Canon Streeter's *Reality*, at least both its publication and the general welcome it has received are exceedingly healthy signs of the times. Modern thought is in grave danger of being submitted wholly to the dominion of the technical expert. An occasional protest is heard such as that contained in the epigrammatic definition of a specialist as 'one who knows more and more about less and less.' And more than twenty years ago I remember hearing an impressive speech in which the specialist was compared with a man who digs a pit in the earth, and sinks down in the pit he is digging until he thinks that he has a horizon before his eyes. But such protests are no remedy. The physicist, the biologist, the psychologist, and the theologian himself each pursues his own line of inquiry in comparative isolation, and in order to facilitate his own work gradually formulates a special language, which makes his conclusions become often obscurer to others in proportion as they are clearer to himself. The twentieth century brings back the curse of Babel in a new form. The layman in the street hears the experts in every subject, religion, science, art, economics, each talking his own foreign tongue; and even the metaphysician, who might claim to act as general interpreter, can only escape the charge of mistranslating by becoming unintelligible himself. Indeed the world of modern thought presents such a chaos of conflicting 'points of view' that it is easy to excuse those who abandon as futile any attempt at unification.

It is no doubt partly due to the same cause that reason has been so largely discredited as a weapon of religious apologetic. Reason, if it means anything at all, is a principle of universal harmony and order; and the conviction, if it still survives the advent of psycho-analysis, that man is a rational animal, suggests that this harmony or order, if it exists, must be capable of being rendered intelligible to the general mind of man. Oddly enough it is the mathematical philosophers who have dealt the shrewdest blow at this kind of rationalism, by maintaining that the esoteric symbols of mathematics are the only adequate medium of true thinking, and that thought expressed in human

language is already more or less vicious. But, be that as it may, it is of the potential intelligibility of all things that the religious man, like his neighbour, has grown sceptical; and certainly many apologists prefer to defend their faith by retiring, with James and Otto, into a special department of experience where the critics, as they claim, are disqualified, rather than by challenging all and sundry to provide a more reasonable account of the universe than theirs.

But Canon Streeter, himself a leading expert in New Testament criticism as well as a distinguished amateur of science and philosophy, takes an opposite view. And surely he at least deserves our thanks 'for not having despaired of the commonwealth' of reason. He still has the temerity to believe that there are general conclusions about the nature of the universe which are not only to be whispered by professors in the ears of their colleagues, but can also be made intelligible when proclaimed from the house-tops. The claim of his book to greatness lies in its combination of depth with clarity. Some readers no doubt will think that occasionally Canon Streeter's metaphors and illustrations fall beneath the dignity of his theme. But even an occasional jar to our sensibilities may serve to remind us of the gratitude we owe to him for maintaining that, because reality is a commonwealth under God's common law, there can be nothing in it which is really commonplace. Since when, after all, has it become offensive to suppose that a hunt for a lost pound note can illustrate the deepest mystery of the Divine nature?

From the philosophical point of view Canon Streeter claims to give us a correlation of science and religion. It is evident at the outset that such a synthesis may be attempted along two different lines. Either it may be contended that scientific and religious knowledge are concerned with different or distinct objects, or else that science and religion deal with the same object from different points of view. Now, it seems obvious on the face of things that religion is more concerned with the value or goodness of what is presented to us in our experience, than is science which is bent on discovering bare facts and the general laws which control them, no matter whether they be in our ultimate judgment

good, evil, or indifferent. Many thinkers have recognized this distinction, and have at once proceeded to the inference that the characteristic aim of religion is rather practical, that of science theoretic. Thus they have supposed that religion and science approach the same object-reality from different points of view and with different interests. And, since it would appear that the activity of knowing, strictly so called, must be theoretic, not practical, there is forthwith bestowed upon science a sovereign authority in all questions of knowledge. No doubt it is a subconscious fear of such a conclusion, which has led many religious thinkers to make all synthesis impossible by arbitrarily fencing off for themselves a certain domain of mystical experience on which all scientific trespass is to be prohibited.

Yet surely nothing could be more fallacious than the underlying assumption that knowledge which has for its object *value*, or, to use Canon Streeter's term, *quality*, is any more practical, or is in principle any less truly and purely knowledge, than the coldest acceptance of bare fact. There is here much danger of confusion. My conscience apprehends that one line of action is right, another wrong. My æsthetic judgment acknowledges supreme beauty in one work of art, and dismisses another as worthless. In both cases the object of knowledge is a value or quality, and of course my judgment is fallible; but in no intelligible sense is it practical. If it is right, it is simply the truth, just as much as if I had asserted that William the Conqueror landed in England in A.D. 1066. And this statement stands, however justly it may be urged that the truth about questions of value is harder to reach or to establish than about questions of fact. To have quality for its object does not make knowledge practical, nor is the coldest study of fact necessarily theoretic. The general practitioner in medicine is a severely practical man. Practical knowledge is his need, when he has a difficult and unusual case to deal with. Does he then seek aid from the preacher, the artist, or the moral philosopher, all of whom might have something to tell him as to the aim and value of medical work? No, he is a practical man; he wants to learn not about ends, but means; and so he has recourse to the coldly scientific volumes which line the shelves of his consulting-room. Practical knowledge means knowing how to change existing realities in a desired direction. Theoretic knowledge is that which does not seek to alter what exists. Judged by that standard a religious knowledge which adores the unchangeable perfection of God,

is, if it be true at all, the most purely theoretic knowledge in the world. What we need to clear our minds here is to go back from Kant to Aristotle.

Canon Streeter therefore seems to be convincing when he maintains both that religion is specially concerned with the value or quality of reality, and also that the object of religious knowledge is really distinct from that of scientific knowledge. If so, he seems to be justified also in his inference that the religious attitude towards reality resembles rather that of the moral and æsthetic consciousness than that of strictly scientific inquiry. There are two genuine elements or features of reality to be known, namely, that which is measurable by some kind of quantitative standard, however refined and delicate and abstractly mathematical such quantitative standards may become, and that, on the other hand, which is in principle not susceptible of measurement, because, like the beauty of a tune or the heroism of self-sacrifice, its essence is quality and not quantity at all. To suppose that our sense of quality in things is 'subjective,' so that quality is not an objective feature of the reality to be known, is an unwarrantable assumption which a sound philosophy does not support. Our general theory of the universe therefore must be as much concerned to account for the genesis of the objective qualities which it reveals, as it is to explain and bring under laws the play of those mechanical or quasi-mechanical forces which determine the structure of what we used to call the material world. Generally speaking, it is the function of religion, morals, and art to deal with the aspect of quality and value; it is the function of science to deal with everything that can be measured in terms of quantity of any kind. This general division of labour will hold good, even if, with Canon Streeter, we acknowledge that from this point of view biology and psychology are found to be less pure sciences than chemistry and physics.

So far I feel myself to be generally in accord with Canon Streeter's splendidly lucid argument. But I am not sure how far I can follow him when he proceeds to further definition of the limitations both of science and of the method whereby religion must express what it knows. Science, according to Canon Streeter, is limited not only in respect of its dealing with quantity, not quality, but also, and in consequence, because it brings all phenomena under general laws, and therefore is obliged to ignore the unique individuality of each particular thing. Religion on the other hand, like art, grasps real individuality, which is seen to be closely connected both with the essence of life and with quality. Our fundamental knowledge of real

individuality springs from our own immediate consciousness of ourselves, and we legitimately infer its existence also in the world outside us. In principle, therefore, religious knowledge is not less direct than that of science, but rather more so, since, by the intuitive sympathy of a life commonly derived and shared, it takes us into the very heart of individual being, while science stands at a certain distance, classifying specimens. But, while religious knowledge is thus essentially *direct*, Canon Streeter tells us at the same time that it can only be expressed in language akin to that of art—symbol, poetry, myth. It would seem therefore that its method of expressing itself is more *indirect* than that of science which baldly states facts and laws. This sounds paradoxical. Again, in what terms is the synthesis of science and religion to be effected? In terms of religion? Then, it seems, the language of synthesis must be symbolic and poetical, akin to that of the Platonic myth. But Canon Streeter's book is undeniably philosophical and argumentative. Should we then say that the synthesis must be philosophical? If so, do we not give to philosophy a priority over religion, which, Canon Streeter says, it ought not to have?

These difficulties and questionings do not necessarily indicate any inconsistency in Canon Streeter's thought; but they certainly invite us to examine it.

Let us start from the assertion that science, in its essential and characteristic work of generalizing, is obliged to ignore the uniqueness and individuality of each particular thing which it studies. In what sense is this true? Confront a botanist and a painter with a vase full of rare blooms of different kinds and colours beautifully arranged. It will probably not be the man of science who ignores the individual flowers in order to admire 'the general effect.' 'Quite so,' Canon Streeter may reply; 'but that is only because the botanist is interested in each bloom as a specimen of a kind, whereas the painter is struck by the uniqueness or individuality of the scheme of form and colour regarded as a whole.' The answer is very just; but it leads to further considerations. The individuality for which the artist cares is not the negative uniqueness which makes this group of flowers just different from all others, but the positive harmony of shapes and shades which makes the group a satisfying whole to the æsthetic eye;¹ and a whole must be

composed of parts. In other words, what matters to the artist is not the individuality which *excludes* other things by bare difference from them, but rather that which *includes* its own component parts in a proper order and balance. This is the individuality which alone gives value; and it can only exist not in a simple particular, but in a composite structure which is, so to speak, a miniature universe. And what is true of the æsthetic judgment, is true also, *mutatis mutandis*, of the moral and religious. A moral act can only be appraised and appreciated in relation to a whole context which exhibits it as the appropriate expression of a certain personality in a certain set of circumstances. And the presence of God can only be acknowledged in some plurality of events or impressions which, considered together in their mutual relations, indicate spiritual being as their cause. Life, as Canon Streeter truly observes, is an individualizing principle. But it individualizes, not because every living organism is different from its fellows—true though that may be—but because each, in being alive, is a complex and organic whole. If every sparrow is deemed worthy of God's remembrance, it is not because two sparrows are more unlike one another than are two peas, but because each embodies in its own mode and measure the complex harmony of infinite life. If, then, science ignores the mere uniqueness of simple particulars, that matters not a jot; religion, art, and morals can well afford to do the same. The real limitation of science is this, that in assiduously analysing phenomena it ignores the manner and significance of their grouping in those wholes which express real quality or value. There lies the blind spot in the vision of scientific research. It can study an agglomeration of classified complexes, but never a mind. It can expose the constitution of the human being, but never discover the man. It is not that an elusive particle of uniqueness always slips through the meshes of the scientific net, but that the wholeness of an individual reality cannot enter them unbroken.

The foregoing reflexions help us to determine why and in what sense it is true that, as Canon Streeter maintains, the native language of religion is in a special way symbolic. Of course (though the obvious is often forgotten) *all* language is necessarily symbol. There can be no such thing as strictly literal truth. For letters in themselves are simply tortuous marks on paper, and merely as such they are meaningless. The very assertion that something is 'literally true' is itself both symbolic and metaphorical. Nevertheless, certain

¹ What makes such a whole appear *beautiful* is ultimately the fact that it gives expression to a unity after which the human soul itself is striving. Compare our Lord's discourse about the lilies.

uses of language to express truth are symbolical in a special sense; and we shall readily agree that this special kind of symbolism belongs rather to art, whether in prose or verse,¹ than to science or philosophy. But we shall make the distinction clearer if we turn to forms of expression which are not literary at all. Suppose a beautiful building to have been erected.² Suppose the most complete and elaborate specification to be drawn up of all its measurements, materials, features, and contents, together with figures giving the exact slope of the ground in the immediate neighbourhood, and perhaps a catalogue with measurements, or a plan, of the main objects surrounding it. And suppose again that a good artist makes a sketch of it from the best angle of vision he can find. Compare the sketch with the specification. Both are symbolic presentations of the building. The specification tells you infinitely more about it. It is complete and exhaustive. The sketch gives very little information at all. But the sketch tells one all-important thing which the specification cannot give—namely, what the whole building was meant to look like. The completeness of the specification omits the wholeness of the building. The sketch, in indicating the individuality of the whole, omits the specification of the parts. In a very analogous way an exhaustive psychological study of the character and life of Julius Cæsar would differ from Shakespeare's tragedy which bears his name. And not wholly otherwise does the scientific study of the universe differ from the vision of it which we catch from the records of inspired religion. Science makes a use of linguistic symbols which approaches the mathematical. Religion makes a use of linguistic symbols which approaches the pictorial. Science aims at the complete specification of parts; religion at the individuality of the whole. Compare a large volume on the scientific study of the Gospels with that single affirmation of the Creed, 'Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven.'

But what of philosophy and theology? These are neither precisely science nor precisely religion, and where do they come in? Again, the foregoing

illustration may help us. When we have the specification and the sketch, there still remains the problem of their correlation. Why did the artist see what he saw from that particular point? Go to the specification, and, if you understand it, you will construct an answer. Why does the specification indicate these particular measurements and materials? Go to the sketch, and, if you appreciate it, you will be able to explain. Very roughly speaking, these questions and answers are analogous to the tasks of the philosopher and the theologian respectively. The philosopher, in so far as he deals with religion, is primarily concerned by the help of knowledge derived from science, to find, as it were, the place of religion on the map, to show how it is that it sees the world in this particular perspective, and how far other knowledge may be said to support or conflict with the truth of its vision. Naturally the philosopher is very ill-equipped for his task, if he cannot appreciate religious values. But he does not start his inquiry, so to speak, from the religious end. On the other hand, the religious end is exactly the starting-point of the theologian. In so far as he deals with science, he is endeavouring to show how the structure of the universe and its events, which science discovers and specifies, does enter into and make possible the religious view of the world, which finds the presence of God precisely in that glimpse of a whole effect of goodness necessarily hidden from the scientific eye. There can therefore be no question of ranking religion, science, theology, and philosophy in any order of absolute priority. Religion and science, each after its kind, give a direct and distinct knowledge of the universe. Philosophy and theology, each according to its own method, endeavour to harmonize the two. To religious faith 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.' The astronomer 'has no need of that hypothesis,' and brings us very different news. Theology and philosophy show us how or how far both may be right; the former by a doctrine of creation which takes full account of natural law operating in space-time, the latter by a theory of natural law which leaves room for the apprehension of Divine values. A Christian holds that the best theology starts from the Christian revelation, and the best philosophy finishes in acknowledgment of its truth.

I have no idea how far Canon Streeter would assent to the foregoing reflections and inferences which the main thesis of his intensely interesting volume has suggested to my mind. The one point that I desire to urge in criticism is that he has not sufficiently

¹ I think it was Coleridge who said that the opposite of prose is verse, and the opposite of poetry is science.

² I am well aware that my analogy begs an important question in favour of religion, by taking a building made to be beautiful, instead of, *e.g.*, a motor-car made for mechanical use. In the latter case the specification would have much greater relative importance, the sketch much less. Fully to justify the choice of analogy would take us too far afield.

distinguished between the negative principle of uniqueness and the positive principle of individuality in things. I felt that the results of this omission appeared particularly in the chapter on our Lord's life. In spite of all Canon Streeter's magnificent belief in the Incarnation and in all it means to Christian theory and practice, yet somehow, whenever he writes of the historic Jesus, the picture of a unique man, a hero and teacher immeasurably greater than any other, is all that his language succeeds in bringing before my eyes. Now, it seems to me to be a radical confusion to suppose that, by emphasizing our Lord's uniqueness as a man, or even by emphasizing His sheer uniqueness in any sense, we can make any progress at all towards thinking of Him as Incarnate God. By such emphasis we might indeed make Him appear as some angelic being or superman, but Godhead would be as far from Him as before. Godhead stands revealed, not in the uniqueness which makes Him different from all other men, but in the supreme individuality which in Him achieves the harmony of all the jarring elements of human nature, and even points the way to the final reconciliation of the awful strife between good and evil in the world. To you and me Jesus Christ is God, not just because He is different from us, but rather because in Him we dimly discern ourselves made new, as we might be; and so has every faithful Christian since He came to earth. His earthly life and teaching are the

mirror which ever transfigures and yet truly reflects every man and his world. It is when men have seen themselves in Christ, that they can also forget themselves in Him. And the words, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and I will give you rest,' if they are true at all, are the clearest declaration of Christ's Deity which man can hear. So St. Paul was inspired to proclaim that Christ Himself is the individuality, the whole perfection, the controlling harmony, of the Church which is His Body. Father Thornton has lately been teaching those who can still read difficult theology that God Himself in Three Persons is the one absolute and perfect Individual.¹

But if I have suggested that Canon Streeter's treatment of individuality is from a certain point of view defective, I would conclude by recording my debt to his two chapters on the Defeat of Evil and on Religion and New Psychology, where he has illuminated and helped me in a way which can only be achieved by theology which, at least to me, is great—and I think this is particularly true of the former chapter. I do not want to comment, or to spoil by summary. But I would ask all whose minds need help in religion to read and ponder. And after all it is by its treatment of the problem of evil that Christian theology must be mainly judged.

¹ See *The Incarnate Lord* (Longmans). The treatment of the idea of individuality is one of the most impressive features of the book.

Literature.

DR. BERNARD'S COMMENTARY ON THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

THE most recent addition to the valuable series, 'The International Critical Commentary,' appears under the title *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, 2 vols. (T. & T. Clark; 30s. net). The author of the Commentary is the Most Rev. and Right Hon. J. H. Bernard, D.D., who had fortunately completed the manuscript of both volumes before his death in August 1927; so that Dr. A. H. McNeile, who has edited the work, has been responsible only for seeing it through the Press.

It is a Commentary for which many have been eagerly waiting, and we make bold to say that it

will fulfil expectations. For in Dr. Bernard, as it appears to us, we have not only a capable guide in all questions relating to the Fourth Gospel but a wise and cautious one as well. One thing that will appeal to readers of a conservative turn of mind is that he does not lightly abandon traditional standpoints in favour of novel theories. For example, while allowing that there was a Jewish mind behind the Fourth Gospel, and that an undertone of Semitic ways of thought and speech may be discerned in its language, he does not allow that, as Dr. Burney urged a few years ago, the Fourth Gospel is of Aramaic origin and its Greek only translation-Greek, betraying its Aramaic base at every point.

On the question of authorship Dr. Bernard is

also inclined to keep as near as possible to tradition. He cannot, it is true, attribute the authorship to the Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, whom he regards, however, as the Apocalypticist, being unable to accept Dr. Charles's view that John the seer is a personage distinct not only from John the Presbyter but also from John the Apostle. But he reaches the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel was written by John the Presbyter from the reminiscences and the teaching of John the Apostle. He would say, with Harnack, that the Fourth Gospel is to be considered as 'a Gospel of John the Presbyter, according to John the son of Zebedee.'

Dr. Bernard does not print a critical apparatus; he regards Tischendorf's as still the most useful. But he names some of the most important authorities for the Gospel, including some of the numerous papyrus fragments. The text printed in the volumes is similar to that followed by Westcott and Hort, and by B. Weiss, although not identical with either. A good case seems to be made out for printing *πρωί* instead of *πρωτον* or *πρωτος* in *1st*; 'he finds *early in the morning* his own brother Simon.' Yet the reading has the support only of one or two Old Latin MSS.

As to the interpretation of the meaning of the Fourth Gospel, Dr. Bernard is insistent that the author was not an allegorist. It was the author's aim and intention that his readers might accept as facts, and not only as symbols, the incidents which he records.

What of the relation of the author of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptists? Dr. Bernard's conclusions are (1) that he almost certainly uses Mark, (2) that most probably he uses Luke, or perhaps we should say Q, and (3) that there is no good evidence that he used Matthew at all, or was aware of the Matthaean tradition as distinct from that of Mark. Dr. Bernard even suggests that the 'Gospel according to St. Matthew' is in its present form the latest of the four canonical Gospels.

Of special value to the student of New Testament theology are the sections in the Introduction (which runs to one hundred and eighty-eight pages) on the Christology of the Fourth Gospel and its Doctrinal Teaching. An interesting point is made in the first of these sections when it is affirmed that the Gospel has been preached with a Jewish accent ever since the disciples of Jesus were first called 'Christians' at Antioch. For the title 'The Son of Man' was in Jesus' regard a greater and more far-reaching designation of Himself than 'the Christ.' He was not only the Deliverer of the Jewish people; He was the Deliverer of humanity

at large. 'And it is an irony of history, that since the first century His most familiar designation by His disciples has been *Christ*, and the religion which He founded has been called *Christianity*, rather than the religion of *Humanity*, the religion of the Son of Man.'

SYNAGOGUE AND CHURCH.

A book of much value alike to Jews and to such Christians as are interested in the origins of the Church has just been published by the Macmillan Co. (\$3.00). It is entitled *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, written by the late Dr. Kaufmann Kohler, perhaps the foremost exponent of Reform Judaism, and revised for publication by H. G. Enelow, who prefaces the volume by a highly interesting account of the writer, who in a remarkable degree blended the interests of the scholar with the passion of the preacher. Dr. Kohler, a man of fine breadth of sympathy, worked for the reconciliation of Judaism and Christianity, and urged that Synagogue and Church, mother and daughter, must learn to work together.

The first part of the book offers an exhaustive examination of the origin of the Synagogue, from which it is clear how profoundly Dr. Kohler's sympathies are with the spiritual and anti-sacerdotal conception of religion which it embodies. He loves to show how through the Synagogue the laity finally wrested the Torah from the priesthood and created the religious democracy of Judaism, and how little the Psalter has been affected by the sacrificial cult. 'The real founders of the Synagogue were not the Pharisees as a body, but their leaders, the Hasidim, or saints, and from them in course of time sprang the Essenes, who, in their turn, produced the first Christians. That is his thesis. The historical background of Jewish worship up to the time of the Maccabees is carefully traced, and the influence of Persia on Jewish practices, such as the wearing of the Tefillin, and on the Jewish Benedictions is duly noted. Throughout these learned chapters, brief as some of them are, such as that on Pharisaic Ethics, there is a wealth of suggestion.

To Christian scholars the second part of the book will be even more interesting. They may often disagree, but they will find the case which they oppose powerfully stated, and about many important statements there can be little or no disagreement, such as that the Early Church took over and adapted the Jewish liturgy. No Christian could speak in terms of higher admiration of Jesus and Paul. Dr. Kohler speaks of 'the

simplicity and incomparable humanity in which 'Jesus, 'the man of the people, eclipsed the Pharisean schoolmen.' 'He was an idealist of the highest type,' 'a redeemer of men and an uplifter of womanhood without parallel in history'; while Paul, 'like one of the great prophets of Israel, exhibited a heroic spirit that places him among the greatest of men.' 'He was indeed an instrument in the hands of Divine Providence to win the heathen nations for Israel's God of righteousness.' This sympathetic appreciation of the Christian position, which, after all, is just the frank but none the less welcome recognition of historic fact, reconciles us to other utterances which will evoke a definite challenge, as when we are told that Jesus 'never encouraged, in fact rather discouraged, industry'—what of the Parable of the Talents?—or that 'what Paul calls The Mystery of the Cross is really a surrender of reason.' But no strictures which may be made in the detail can diminish our grateful appreciation of this book, which is a real contribution to historical research, marked by wide learning and noble generosity of spirit.

THREE MINOR PROPHETS.

A melancholy interest attaches to the latest addition to the 'Westminster Commentaries,' which is the volume on *The Books of the Prophets Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk* (Methuen; 15s. net). The commentary on the first two prophets was written by the late Mr. G. G. V. Stonehouse, B.D., who eighteen years ago gave us a scholarly book on Habakkuk, and who passed away at the early age of thirty-eight. Dr. G. W. Wade, who writes the commentary on Habakkuk, abridged and adapted Mr. Stonehouse's work to the plan of the Westminster series. How faithfully this task, which was no light one, has been discharged is suggested by a quite incidental remark in a footnote on p. 148, which shows that he does not share Mr. Stonehouse's view of the date of Nahum as 625 B.C.

The commentary proper is prefaced by introductions which deal at reasonable length with the historical background of the respective prophecies, with their message, their teaching, and their literary form, and concluded by translations which embody the results of the textual criticism of the books. Zephaniah, who is set about 626 B.C., and connected with the Scythian invasion, is regarded, while essentially a prophet of doom, as one who prepared the way for the reform of 621. The original prophecy was supplemented by 'at

least three revisers, the first of whom lived towards the close of Josiah's reign, the second in the last decade or decade-and-a-half of the monarchy, and the third at the close of the exile.' Nahum is regarded as predicting the Fall of Nineveh in view of the attack on Assyria by the Medes under Cyaxares in 625. His prophecy also was subjected to three revisions, of which one of the latest is the fragment of an alphabetic psalm preserved in 1²⁻⁸.¹⁰ The view that Nahum was a 'false' prophet, unethical and nationalistic, is vigorously repudiated. Of the very perplexing Book of Habakkuk, Dr. Wade summarizes the opinions of recent English and German scholars, and concludes by rejecting the growingly popular view of Duhm which places the book in the fourth century and connects it, by emending the crucial 'Chaldeans' in 1⁶ to 'Kittim,' with the conquests of Alexander and his Greeks. Duhm's argument, as developed by Sellin, is more formidable than Dr. Wade has been able to represent it in the space at his disposal, and his own view that 1⁵⁻¹¹ is 'quoted by Habakkuk from some earlier prophecy (delivered probably by himself)' will seem to many rather unsatisfactory. There is a fine appreciation of the literary power of Habakkuk, and especially of that of Nahum, and the emphasis on the religious message of all these prophets is very welcome.

All of them, and especially the two named, present desperate textual problems, and these are dealt with as adequately as is possible without the use of Hebrew script. Here are two illustrations. For ירִיֵּשׁ in Zeph 3¹⁷ (*he will be silent in his love*) the writer suggests יִרְחֹשׁ (*he will be stirred*; cf. Ps 45²); while for the impossible חֵיִן (*wine*) in Hab 2⁶, for which Sellin ingeniously conjectures חֵיִנִי (*the Greek*), he proposes הַיִּנֹּה (*the tyrant*).

Few of the minor prophets receive less attention from preachers than those dealt with in this volume. These interesting introductions and the careful and sympathetic exegesis are well fitted to show preachers how much they lose by the neglect of them.

FUNDAMENTALISM.

In *Essentials and Non-Essentials of the Christian Faith* (T. & T. Clark; 5s. net), Professor John Mackintosh Shaw, M.A., D.D., of Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, discusses the 'Five Points of Fundamentalism' from a modern conservative standpoint. The Five Points are the inerrancy of Scripture, the Virgin Birth of Jesus, His atonement by vicarious sacrifice, His physical

resurrection ('with the same body with which he suffered'), and the supernatural character of His miracles. Dr. Shaw does well to remind us that while these Five Points were drawn up in 1910, and reaffirmed in 1923, by the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., they are not regarded as essential to Church membership, but are to be subscribed only by candidates for ordination. It is a valid distinction, such as a Church may rightly enforce, and the reminder may serve to remove prejudice in some quarters against the Fundamentalist position.

It is the burden, however, of Dr. Shaw's book, which is very clearly written, that in the alleged 'essential' doctrines of the Fundamentalists there is a serious confusion between properly religious or spiritual convictions which are of the essence of the Christian faith, and particular doctrinal or theological formulations of these convictions on which liberty of judgment may very well be allowed even within the Christian ministry. It is a timely thesis, and gathers together many ideas that have long been in the minds of Christian preachers and teachers who are at once loyal to Scripture and anxious to bring their theology into line with modern thought.

In our opinion the Modernist would find most satisfaction in the discussions of the Inspiration of the Scriptures and of Jesus and Miracle; the chapters on the Incarnation and Virgin Birth, the Atoning Work of Christ, and the Resurrection of Christ are not so likely to appeal to him. But we think that the whole book is well worthy of the consideration of the Fundamentalist. It seems a pity that at this time of day doctrinal requirements which may actually be non-essential to the Christian faith should be made even of the Christian minister.

RAMON LULL

Even in the crowded galleries of Church history few more romantic figures look down on us than that of Ramon Lull. Yet for a hundred and fifty years no full-length biography of him has appeared in any language. In English, at least, that yawning gap has at last been filled, and this most worthy. Professor E. Allison Peers, M.A., has made himself the authority among us in this whole region of things; and books, large and small, translations and original works, keep flowing from his pen. And it is this most competent scholar who gives us *Ramon Lull* (S.P.C.K.; 18s.), a fine biography of a most fascinating personality. Our

author has ransacked the authorities and delved deep into little known sources for his materials. There is a bibliography of fourteen pages—two hundred and thirty-three volumes, mostly in Spanish—and the writer's heart is in his work. And well it might be. For what an arresting soul is this with which he deals—the young court gallant, petted, proud, light of love, fortune's spoiled favourite—with his passionate nature, and his haughty will! Did he not once ride into a church in pursuit of a lady who had taken shelter there? Yet one day, humming an amorous ditty to which he was fitting naughty enough words, he was suddenly confronted by the vision of Christ on the Cross; and, though he thrust it from him, it returned four separate times, till even his proud will was conquered; and, leaving all he had, vowing himself to our Lady of Valour, clothed only in sackcloth, he settled down among his former friends, determined to live only for Jesus Christ. His zeal ran out in two directions—disputations with Jews, whom he found immovable, and with Saracens, whom he declared to be much nearer Christianity than they themselves at all realized, and often singularly open-minded. Curious, is it not, that the list of people's difficulties that he gives from his own practical experience is word for word the self-same questions hecklers on the streets shoot at us still! But, in the main, he gave himself to writing, with that bewilderingly prolific output, characteristically Spanish. Some say he wrote five thousand volumes! Certainly, it seems, they mounted up to two hundred and fifty! In less than two years he threw out some forty tomes, some of them huge. 'The Tree of Science' has thirteen hundred and ten pages, 'The Book of Contemplation' three thousand! 'Some of them, as he says himself, 'are good, some of them better.' They are of every kind. Those on Natural Science were in their time hailed as a new kind of knowledge—with special Chairs for its study founded in various Universities—though by the time of Rabelais and Bacon they had already become a thing at which to jeer. There are poems too, and deep mystical masterpieces like 'The Lover and the Beloved,' and spiritual romances like 'Blanquerna,' and shrewd proverbs ('Disbelieve not all the things which thou canst not understand'; 'Faith is near to the will, and far from the understanding')—books upon books, of every kind, all for the greater glory of God.

But the passion of the man's life was to reach the non-Christian races. In the time of St. Louis' Crusade he was against crusades, and all for peaceful

argument and preaching. Later, he let himself be carried away by the currents of the time. But argument, he felt, alone could really win the world. He went to school and learnt Arabic and Oriental languages with striking thoroughness, although he had no natural aptitude for what seemed to him like 'the voices and languages of the beasts.' He instituted Miramar, a college to train missionaries in languages and in the necessary sympathy and understanding for the foreign field; and year in and year out he laboured to induce the Pope, or the Church somehow, to set up such colleges in numbers. For he believed passionately in Apologetics, and held that the faith is so unanswerable that, stated by skilled men, it must prevail. No man had greater reverence for faith. Yet again and again in his books he comes back to his point that the faith can and should be set forth so as to storm the understanding. The Saracens he felt were waiting for the gospel. It maddened him to think that for each Christian there were a hundred who had never heard of Christ. He felt the times were critical. Win the Saracens, and we win the world; or, later, when the Tartars loomed up ominously in men's minds, if we win them all is done. But if they take to Muhammadanism! Once he had a vision of Christ, who left His Cross in his hands, and so as an old man he himself went three times to the Muslims preaching, arguing, carrying out the principles for which he lived. Twice he escaped with stoning and imprisonment and shipwreck. But the third time, when eighty-three, he won a martyr's death. It was a full and crowded life, all aglow and glistering of romance. Yet, as he often says himself, people thought of him as 'a fantastic fool' who 'talked endlessly and did nothing.' That criticism still survives in certain quarters. Let Ramon Lull make his own answer from his autobiography. 'I have been married and had children. I have been well to do, lascivious and worldly. Anything that I had in the world I have left that I might honour God, procure the greater good of my neighbour and exalt our holy faith. I have learned Arabic, and laboured to convert the Moors. I have been bound, imprisoned and assaulted. For five and forty years I have laboured to move Christian princes and prelates that they may promote the common weal of the Church. Now I am old and poor, yet still I have the same purpose, and trust that, with the grace of God, I may persevere therein even unto death. Does such a life as this seem to you fantastic? Let your conscience judge, as God Himself will judge you.'

CHRISTIAN RE-UNION.

In our day the scandal and the danger of the Christian house divided against itself are pressing on many consciences, and visions of re-union are thrilling the imagination of many in all the denominations. Most timely, therefore, is the appearance of a book which gives a comprehensive survey of the history of division and union from the earliest times to our own, and we welcome such a volume as *Christian Unity: Its History and Challenge*, by the Rev. Gaius Jackson Slosser, B.A., Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S. (Kegan Paul; 21s. net). The work covers a wide field, and requires the compression of many chapters of Church History. Apart from a few, probably typographical, errors—for example, 'Motanist' for 'Montanist' (p. 4), '1843' for '1834' (p. 158)—the narrative is accurate, although, of necessity, very concise.

The long story has a moral, and the moral, strongly and convincingly urged, is the beauty and necessity of unity in the Church of God. The way to union, in the author's view, is by a preliminary policy of close federation; and among other things, all Churches must learn to regard themselves as means, not ends, and, above all, develop the will to unity. 'When the communicants of the Churches have the will to seek and attain unto unity, God will enable them to overcome all otherwise insuperable barriers. All that is dross will be consumed, and all that is gold will yet remain.'

ARAMAIC.

For one person who can read the Aramaic of the Palestinian Talmud or the Old Testament, there are probably a thousand who can read the Hebrew. The prevalent ignorance of Aramaic, while intelligible, is scarcely creditable, and, since the publication of Professor W. B. Stevenson's *Aramaic Grammar*, is no longer altogether pardonable. There seems, however, to be a revival of interest in Aramaic studies, and two recently published books should help to stimulate that revival.

One is a *Manual of the Aramaic Language of the Palestinian Talmud*, by the late Principal J. T. Marshall, M.A., D.D., edited from the author's MS. by the Rev. J. Barton Turner, with an introduction by Dr. Mingana (Brill, Leyden; 21s. net). It contains a grammar, a vocalized text of one hundred and sixteen selections, an unvocalized text of twenty-four more, representing in all seventy-nine large pages of Aramaic text, and a vocabulary. The Grammar is disposed of in thirty pages, which,

to one who has some acquaintance with Hebrew, is sufficient for practical purposes. The beautifully printed text is filled with all kinds of sayings, and especially anecdotes, which give one a real glimpse into the nature and astonishing variety of the Talmud. The value of the vocabulary, which is very complete, is enhanced by the numbered references to the sections of the text in which the Aramaic words occur. But of quite inestimable value to the beginner will be the translations. All the texts are fully translated, with bracketed insertions of such words or phrases as are necessary to complete the sense. Writers of grammars too often forget that the self-taught sometimes struggle long and in vain, just for the lack of such help as this. It is with special pleasure that we commend this introduction to the study of 'the dialect most closely akin to that spoken by Jesus and His first disciples,' and of the language which Dr. Mingana describes as 'a beautiful language which deserves to be more widely studied.'

The other book is entitled *The Aramaic of the Old Testament: A Grammatical and Lexical Study of its Relation with other Early Aramaic Dialects*, by Mr. H. H. Rowley (Milford; 10s. 6d. net). This profoundly judicial and scholarly discussion is essentially a reply to Professor R. D. Wilson's defence of the early and Babylonian origin of Daniel, which is supposed by many to be supported by the discovery of the Elephantine papyri. Mr. Rowley vigorously contends, on the other hand, that Biblical Aramaic stands somewhere between the Aramaic of these fifth-century papyri and the Aramaic of the Nabatean and Palmyrene inscriptions, which range from the first century B.C. to the third century A.D. With great fulness and care he compares Biblical Aramaic with the Aramaic preserved to us in other sources—in regard, for example, to accident, syntax, verbal forms, consonantal mutations, etc.—and proves conclusively that very frequently Biblical Aramaic differs from that of the papyri, while it is in definite agreement with that of the Targums. The Greek words in Daniel are subjected to a particularly interesting examination: three of them are names of musical instruments, one of which is definitely associated by Polybius with Antiochus Epiphanes, so that these words 'mark that book as being almost certainly not of Babylonian origin in the sixth century B.C., but with peculiar likelihood of Palestinian origin and of the second century B.C.' The Aramaic of Daniel is later in type than that of Ezra, but 'the interval between them could not have been very considerable, and may have been

very slight.' This valuable discussion, which is conducted with great learning and acumen, shows very convincingly how intimately linguistic problems may bear upon problems of introduction.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE MAKING.

Readers who know Professor E. F. Scott's 'First Age of Christianity' will find in his *Kerr Lectures* a development and expansion of views with which he has already made them familiar. The lectures are published under the title *The Gospel and its Tributaries* (T. & T. Clark; 10s. net). Professor Scott is a recognized authority on Early Church history. His literary style is lucid and interesting. Those two considerations will, we hope, secure for the book the large circle of readers which it so well deserves. It is all the more fitted to appeal to the general reader in that the author touches only such topics as admit of full illustration from the New Testament.

After an introductory discussion of 'Old and New in the Gospel,' the volume deals with the Jewish inheritance, the message of Jesus, the Hellenistic influence, the contribution of Paul, the conflict with heresy, the rise of the Catholic Church, and a final discussion of 'the gospel as borrowed and creative.' The main object is to show that while Christianity borrowed much, it is not a mere amalgam. From the first it had something distinctive of its own, and in light of that it transformed all it borrowed. Such a view needs to be emphasized in our time, and we recommend most cordially this masterly treatment of so important a subject.

FROM CURATE TO PRIMATE.

In *Archbishop Davidson and the English Church*, by Mr. Sidney Dark (Philip Allan & Co.; 8s. 6d. net), we have not so much an intimate biography of Lord Davidson—for the writer has had no access to any private papers—as a study of his career as a Churchman, dictated by a vastly different conception of the character of the Church from that which the ex-Archbishop held; that is to say, the conception of those who now like to be known as 'Anglo-Catholics' rather than as 'High Churchmen.' It is nevertheless not unsympathetic. The writer recognizes that 'a very great figure has passed from the centre of the ecclesiastical stage—a strong man, sincere, steadfast, perhaps limited in sympathy . . . but never failing in his eagerness to serve the nation and the Church.'

Lord Davidson's career may be regarded as that of the typical Scotsman who goes to London to make his way and finds himself at the end of three years as a curate in the Church of England entering Lambeth Palace as Chaplain-Secretary to the Archbishop, another Scotsman. All the rest seems to follow the order of romance. Within a year his Chaplain-Secretary had become Archbishop Tait's son-in-law, later he had won the favourable notice of Queen Victoria, who at the first opportunity made him Dean of Windsor; and after two brief experiences—four years as Bishop of Rochester and seven years as Bishop of Winchester—Randall Davidson was appointed by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, Archbishop of Canterbury in February 1902.

Thus the young and inexperienced curate who first entered Lambeth Palace in 1877 as Chaplain-Secretary to the Archbishop found himself after twenty-five years again in residence there as Primate of the Church of England! Alike as Archbishop's secretary, as Bishop, and as Archbishop the High Church party was his 'thorn in the flesh.' Queen Victoria did not conceal the fact that she had 'the greatest abhorrence' for 'that party that has done so much to undermine the Church, and to poison the minds of the young and of the higher classes,' and rejoiced to think that Dizzy's Public Worship Regulation Act would keep them in order. It only made martyrs of the most extreme Ritualists. Those members of the Church, however, who were not ashamed but proud to call themselves Protestants were no more content a quarter of a century ago than they are to-day with the temporizing policy of the episcopate. In less than a fortnight after Dr. Davidson's enthronement at Canterbury—by the way, with none of the elaborate ritual that marked the recent enthronement of his successor—a deputation of a hundred Protestant M.P.'s waited upon him at Lambeth Palace to make an emphatic protest against 'the popish practices of disobedient priests' and to demand their prosecution. The Archbishop deprecated prosecutions, but he spoke of 'certain notorious cases,' and declared that 'the sands had run out,' adding, 'I desire and intend that we shall now act, and act sternly.'

What actually happened—the appointment of a Royal Commission to consider the whole subject—was due, not to the Archbishop but to the Balfour Government. This Commission made a unanimous Report in 1906 in which they recommended that certain specified ritualist practices should be 'promptly made to cease by the exercise of the

authority belonging to the bishops and if necessary by proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts.' It also recommended that the two Convocations should frame, with a view to their enactment by Parliament, 'such modifications in the existing law relating to the conduct of Divine Service and to the ornaments and fittings of churches as may tend to secure the greater elasticity which a reasonable recognition of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England and of its present needs seems to demand.'

WHAT IS GOD?

Christianity has come to terms with its former alleged foes—astronomy, geology, and biology. The conflict with psychology, however, remains, and it is vital for religion in a sense in which the older were not. For if, as some psychologists will have it, God is only a 'rationalization' or 'projection,' then all real meaning has departed from religion, and the continued vigorous existence of religion is scarcely conceivable. This is realized by Dr. Cyril H. Valentine in his book *What do we mean by God?* (S.P.C.K.; 7s. 6d. net). He sees also that the most important question of our day is just, Does God really exist? That can be answered only after an inquiry as to the validity of our religious experience. This is one of the best and most useful books on the subject that we know. Dr. Valentine's wide reading is attested on every page. His philosophic grasp of the problems that emerge is masterly. And it is all put down with such ease, clarity, and literary grace as makes the solid and sustained argument a sheer pleasure to read.

The problems that arise are many. They include the relations of religion to science, art, philosophy, and morality; the nature of religious experience; the personality of God; the nature and place of faith. We can do no more than thus indicate the richness of the contents of a work which will serve as a guide both as to what is the most serious conflict religion has ever had to wage, and as to how it may be faced with assurance and confidence.

We are grateful to author and publishers for putting such a valuable, scholarly, and competent work within the reach of the general reading public at so low a price.

The Halley Stewart Trust has already given us two remarkable books, Sir Oliver Lodge's 'Science and Human Progress,' and Dr. Gore's 'Christ and

Society,' both appreciatively reviewed in these columns. The latest addition to the series is *The Ordeal of this Generation: The War, The League, and The Future*, by Professor Gilbert Murray, LL.D., D.Litt., F.B.A., and in its own way it is as remarkable as its predecessors. The sub-title explains Dr. Murray's idea. The 'ordeal' of this generation is the task before civilized man of adapting himself to meet the profound changes, political, social, economic, and intellectual, which have taken place during the last fifty years. This adaptation means the abolition of war, and Dr. Murray has no hesitation in viewing this as practical politics. But there is nothing of the fanatic about him. He recognizes the inevitable place of strife and conflict in human nature. He does not ask the impossible. Indeed, his plea is strongly reinforced by his sane reasonableness. And it would be difficult for any person as reasonable as Dr. Murray to resist either his arguments or his conclusions. Any one who wishes to know what the League stands for, how it works, what its claims to support are, what the 'Covenant' is and the 'Pact,' and where we ourselves stand as a nation, could not get the information from a better quarter. Many of us have felt that the weakness of the League is its powerlessness to interest people or to awaken enthusiasm. But few will continue to feel this after reading Dr. Murray's persuasive pages. As a piece of propaganda this book will make many converts, because it is full of information, of sense, of sound thinking, and of restrained devotion to an ideal that is not in the air but supremely practical and practicable. The publishers are Allen & Unwin, and the price is 4s. 6d. net, but it may be hoped that very soon a cheap edition will be published which will put the book within reach of 'the man in the street.'

Canon Sell, one of the greatest living authorities on Islam, has increased our debt to him by his recent volume on *Islam in Spain* (Church Missionary Society; 3s.). In it he gives an account—which, though succinct, is packed full of material—of the seven hundred and forty-nine years of the Muslim empire in Europe. While maintaining that it was fortunate for Europe that Arab rule did not succeed in establishing itself permanently there, he frankly admits that the expulsion of the Moors deprived Spain of skilful craftsmen, agriculturists, and merchants, though the decay of that country, as he points out, was also largely due to the Inquisition and to the folly of expelling the Jews. The chapter of greatest interest is that on

'Arabian Philosophy.' The Canon contends that there is really no 'Arab' philosophy, only one of the famous philosophers, Al-Kindi, being an Arab. What we commonly call Arabian philosophy is really Greek philosophy in an Arabic dress. Islam as a religion has contributed nothing to science or philosophy: it could assimilate, elucidate, and transmit the thoughts of others, and it is only in this very modified sense that the Renaissance can be said to be in any way due to Islamic civilization, a civilization to which the Jews made a highly important contribution. This chapter is an effective answer to the extravagant claims of some modern Muslims.

Another aspect of Canon Sell's many-sided activity is illustrated by his booklet on *The Kingdom of God* (Church Missionary Society; 9d.). Here he traces the idea of the Kingdom through the Old and New Testaments, discussing the pre-exilic and the post-exilic view, and the conception underlying the teaching of the Gospels and the Epistles. He argues that 'to our Lord the Kingdom had not merely an eschatological significance, but was a very present reality to be fully glorified in a world to come.' It will be convenient not only to Indian pastors, for whom the book was primarily written, but to general readers to have this lucid and succinct account of an idea which has played so dominant a part alike in the Jewish and the Christian religions.

The 'Studies in Theology' series of volumes has been familiar to us for a considerable time, and many famous books have been included in it. There are few ministers' libraries that have not one or two volumes of the series on their shelves. And they will be able to add another in *Christianity and Some Living Religions of the East*, by Dr. Sydney Cave, the President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge (Duckworth; 5s. net). Dr. Cave had already contributed to the same series an 'Introduction to the Study of Some Living Religions of the East.' In the new volume he goes on to compare their dominant conceptions with those of Christianity. He reviews the answers given by those religions to the great problems of God's nature and manifestation, and of man's redemption, duty, and destiny. And his conclusion is that the Christian gospel is the solution of our deepest questions and the true answer to the quest of the saints and seers, not of Christendom only, but of the non-Christian world. This conclusion is all the more acceptable that the inquiry has been made by a competent expert

and conducted with fairness and with an appreciation of the truth in non-Christian religions which are characteristic of the broader outlook of our day. Incidentally, it may be said that this appreciative attitude is assumed by none more readily and widely than by present-day missionaries. Dr. Cave adds to this the judgment that if we present Christianity to the East as the religion of the West we shall offer it in vain. Our Western interpretation is not exhaustive, and if the Christian gospel is to win the East it must go in an Eastern guise. This was affirmed long ago by so eminent a missionary as Dr. Miller of Madras, and it is interesting to have it repeated and reinforced by an eminent scholar. Dr. Cave's book is as interesting as it is authoritative.

In 1608, Milton's birth year, there were born two boys in India who were destined through their poetry and character to win almost as great a place in the life and literature of their own people as he holds with us;—Tukārām, with his enormous influence on the North, and he who chose to call himself Rāmdās, for long one of the real religious powers in Western India.

Dr. Wilbur S. Deming tells us the story of the latter in a competent addition to that useful series 'The Religious Life of India'—*Rāmdās and the Rāmdāsīs* (Milford; 6s. net). It is that of a queer mixture of a man. At times, for instance, he shammed madness—to preserve himself from the intrusions of unnecessary visitors, thinks Dr. Deming. Would that keep our own working hours immune from that sore discipline? And in his mind there was the oddest jumble of conflicting doctrines living in peaceful amity. For was he not a firm believer in the dim remote Unknowable of the Vedānta, and yet a passionate Bhakta; or, again, at once an idolater, and a pure theist in some moods, always indeed, it would appear.

However that may be, his life and saintliness and poetry, and above all his immense influence on the famous founder of the great Maratha State, made him a mighty personality till that power fell. Now the movement that he started has shrunk to the merest trickle, or at least has faded to a shadow of itself. So much so that the last chapter here, entitled Rāmdās and Jesus, with its elaborate weighing of the Teachings, one against the other, seems lacking in sense of proportion. Still, this is a useful book.

Much careful study lies behind Mr. F. H. Wales's *Revised Translation of the Psalms*, Book I. (Milford;

1s. net). The translation hits the happy medium between slavish literalness and free paraphrase. The work is so unobtrusively done that only scholars will be able to detect its full excellence, or the acquaintance with the textual criticism of the Psalter which it presupposes. Here are a few of the changes made on the more familiar English versions: in Ps 2¹² 'Kiss the Son' disappears; in 11⁶ 'snares, fire' becomes 'coals of fire'; in 18³⁵ 'gentleness' becomes 'help'; in 23⁶ 'for ever' appears as 'for length of days'; in 29⁹ for 'maketh the hinds to calve' we have 'whirleth the oak trees'; the enigmatic introduction to 36¹ is replaced by 'Pleasant is transgression to the wicked in his heart'; in 37³⁶ 'he passed away' becomes 'I passed by,' etc. At numberless such points the text is quietly corrected and the meaning improved, though we could have wished that in 8⁵ the writer had retained A.V.'s 'angels' as much nearer the truth than R.V.'s 'God,' which is as good as impossible in an address to God. The printing is so arranged as to bring out the metrical structure of the psalms, so that, alike by the presentation of the literary form and by the removal of errors, Mr. Wales has made it possible for readers who know no Hebrew to enter into the very spirit of the Psalter. We hope that the writer will in due time give us the whole Book of Psalms.

At a time when there seems to be a flagging interest in the romance of foreign missions, Messrs. Pickering & Inglis are doing a real service in publishing a cheap edition of such a wonderful story as the life of *Robert Morrison: Pioneer of Missions to China* at the price of 2s. net. During the civil war that has devastated that huge empire and driven missionaries from the most of the territories they had so hardly won, there could be no more inspiring incentive to fresh courage for the task that now confronts the Christian Churches of Great Britain and America. Here was the son of a humble and pious workman in Newcastle-on-Tyne, who had the inspiration that the opening of China to the Christian evangelist was to be his life's work. Beset with remonstrances from home and with the difficulty ahead of them of China shut and sealed against the intrusion of the Protestant missionary, yet he never wavered but followed the gleam with the amazingly successful results so well described in this narrative, written by Mr. W. J. Townsend. Morrison landed in Canton, where the East India Company had a trading station, to whose agents he had letters of introduction. Just when the way seemed blocked by

insuperable difficulties he was offered and accepted the position of official translator of Chinese to the East India Company at a salary of £500 a year. This was the man who became the first translator of the New Testament into Chinese, to which he was able later to add the Old Testament. No wonder that missionary societies here and in America were amazed at the work of the humble pioneer and his equally humble coadjutor, a Mr. Milne from that fine training-ground of missionary pioneers—Aberdeenshire.

The same publishers have also issued in their two shilling series the story of Bishop *James Hannington*, the English merchant's son who was martyred in Central Africa. The all too brief and promising career of the young and popular clergyman in a Sussex rural parish where he had spent his youth and early manhood, and who gave up everything in his desire to extend the Christian evangel in Central Africa right up to the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza, has been rewritten by Mr. Charles D. Michael. More than forty years have passed since Bishop Hannington landed in East Africa for his second and fatal journey into the interior; and it is easy now to question whether he was prudent in undertaking the expedition of which he was the sole European leader. He did not wish, we are told, to expose any of his friends to the risks it involved. To himself he made light of them. If only he could have got into touch with that notable pioneer Mackay of Uganda, already on the scene, there must have been a very different story to tell than that of the cruel butchery that closed his career ere his work had been begun.

Another book in Messrs. Pickering & Inglis's two shilling series is *Women who have Worked and Won*. It contains brief biographies of Mrs. Spurgeon, Mrs. Booth-Tucker, the second daughter of the first General and Mrs. Booth, and known throughout the United States as 'The Consul,' Miss Frances Ridley Havergal, and Pandita Ramabai. They have been written by Jennie Chappell with notable skill, so that the necessary compression has not in any instance interfered with the writer's purpose of emphasizing their belief in and remarkable experience of the power of prayer. Their methods differed as widely as their characters and their careers, but all alike were ardent followers of Jesus Christ.

The third and final volume of Miller's *Short Papers on Church History* is now in our hands (Pickering & Inglis; 7s. 6d. net). The whole work consists of a re-issue of 'Papers on Church History'

published by Mr. Andrew Miller over forty years ago, with an additional chapter by Mr. W. Hoste, B.A.

The latest additions to the already extensive 'Things Seen' series of travel guides published by Messrs. Seeley, Service & Co. (3s. 6d. net) include beautifully illustrated little volumes dealing with *Things Seen in the Channel Islands*, by Mr. Clive Holland; *Things Seen in Provence*, by Captain Leslie Richardson; *Things Seen in Morocco*, by Mr. L. E. Bickerstaffe, M.A., B.Sc.; and *Things Seen in Sicily*, by Miss Isabel Emerson, who exhausts her vocabulary of superlatives in describing its manifold beauties from the rising of the sun till the going down of the same. The tourist will not only profit from reading these guides before he sets out on his travels, but still more by comparing his impressions with the descriptions and illustrations he will find here.

In *English Ecclesiastical Studies* (S.P.C.K.; 15s. net) Miss Rose Graham has collected together sixteen essays in research in mediæval history which were written and printed in reviews and publications of learned societies between 1903 and 1926. Six of the essays relate to Cluny and the English Cluniac monasteries, a subject on which the author intends to write a separate book. But the influence of Cluny was not confined to English monasticism: though the monks of Paisley came immediately from Wenlock, which was itself an offshoot from the Priory of La Charité-sur-Loire, it was to the Abbey of Cluny that they looked as their head. There are also four studies from the register of Robert Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury; and among the essays of more general interest may be mentioned one on the Intellectual Influence of English Monasticism, and another—'only attached to mediæval ecclesiastical history by the slender thread of the election of women churchwardens in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'—on the Civic Position of Women at Common Law before 1800. The essays are learned, scholarly, rich in detail, and most carefully documented; there are many excellent illustrations; and there is an index which, in Dr. Johnson's phrase, is no 'mere beating the track of the alphabet,' but in its combination of spaciousness with conciseness and precision reflects the best traditions of indexing.

We have received volume v. of *Ante-Nicene Exegesis of the Gospels*, by the Rev. Harold Smith, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 7s. 6d. net). It is a work of

laborious research and accurate translation. The method followed is to arrange under New Testament texts whatever the Fathers said by way of comment or exposition.

Our main criticism of *The Coming of the Church*, by Mr. J. R. Coates, M.A., of Selly Oak Colleges (S.C.M.; 3s. net), is that it is much too compressed. It reads rather like notes for a book than the book itself. The space occupied by quoting *in extenso* long Scriptural passages might have been utilized for expansion and explanation of the theme. Mr. Coates has an interesting theory that the Old Testament describes an ideal Israel under such categories as Covenant-people, Light of the World, Son of Man, Son of God, Suffering Servant and Messiah; that Christ came to call that true Israel into organized being; and that the New Testament writings exhibit in turn the main ways in which the

Church is designed to stand forth in the world as the true Israel. It is often arresting and thought-provoking, but the treatment is far too slight.

Dr. Samuel Daiches delivered a lecture on *The Bible as Literature*, which has been published by Williams, Lea & Co., Worship Street, London, E.C. 2. The treatment is very unconventional. The lecturer 'sketches a few pictures' to illustrate his theme. He traces the life of a human being from early childhood through adolescence and manhood up to old age, and shows that, in all the experiences through which he passes and to all the questions he can ask, the Old Testament has some wise, gracious, and solemn words to say. The treatment, though suggestive, is very slight, and we hope that Dr. Daiches will elaborate it some day, as, with his wide knowledge and his vein of poetry, he is well qualified to do.

The Book of Job and the Problem of Suffering.

BY MARJORY S. WEST, B.A., B.D., UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LECTURER, LONDON AND OXFORD.

In a powerful article on 'The God of the Old Testament,' reproduced in translation in *The Bible and Modern Thought*, Dr. Paul Volz criticises the modern anthropocentric attitude towards religion and shows that the attitude of both Old and New Testaments is a theocentric one throughout. The Bible, like the burning bush, is all on fire with God. It is the wonderful works of God which the Old Testament proclaims, the whole of Nature revealing His glory and the course of history showing His wonderful ways with man. It is God whose glory the heavens declare, it is God whose love and mercy human life shows forth, it is God who is everywhere first and foremost in the writer's thoughts. When we remember that to the Jew this God is the Absolute Righteousness, and that righteousness to Israel became progressively filled with the content of loving, omnipotent, fatherly care, till it culminated in the conception of God given by Christ Himself, we can see that the faith in which both Old and New Testaments are steeped is the sublime conviction of the moral order of the universe, an order, not abstract and impersonal, as to the Greeks, but the personal law of a Father's love. This great reality dominates all else. Before

it man assumes his right place, as but one among created things, the chiefest, it may be, yet whose sole and highest reason for existence, whose greatest glory, is to be able to be the expression of the Divine righteousness. The Old Testament begins by proclaiming that man is made in the image of God. The New Testament shows that image as the measure of the fulness of the stature of Christ. The whole progressive and painful training of mankind is aimed at producing this stature, so as to reveal in man's own person moral perfection, which is the very glory of God.

Modern religious teaching too often inverts this position by making man the centre of the universe and by treating of God as there solely for the benefit of the human race. To this inversion is largely due its lamentable lack of appeal in the present day. If God's sole reason for existence is to serve and comfort man, to assist him in his efforts to attain happiness here and hereafter, if religion is merely a form of consolation or anæsthetic, a drug to be used to alleviate the pains incidental to human life, then it is obvious to any pleasure-loving, pain-fearing soul that religion is but a poor consolation at the best, that

its consolations deserted the Divinest soul the world ever saw in His hour of extreme need, and that the Psalmist's cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' is but typical of man's age-long cry of agony in the face of torments he cannot understand—the strongest argument against the moral order of the universe, and the strongest condemnation of its Ruler, who proves thereby either His utter incapacity to rule, or His heartlessness in the face of human pain.

Man cannot long worship a feeble or an ineffective God, however loving. Hence the modern emphasis on the Christian religion as a kind of anodyne to pain, and the presentment of a God helplessly trying to seek and save a suffering and despairing world, has proved itself futile in the extreme. If God is the servant of man it is clear He is but a poor servant, and man therefore seeks relief from his ills elsewhere.

But this presentation of Christianity is false both to the spirit of the Old Testament and of the New. In both, the attitude of man to God is entirely reversed. In the Epistle to the Hebrews even the Son of God Himself is made perfect through that which He suffered, and suffering and death are in themselves the glory with which the greatest of mankind are crowned. In other words, God, or the personal moral law, is not there to serve man, but man is there to serve it, or Him, to the very uttermost, even to death by torture; and the possibility of such faithful service is the most Divine achievement, the highest glory, to which the human race can attain.

This is a religion worthy the reverence, the devotion, and the obedience of all that is most heroic in the nature of man. Religion, to be worthy the name, must be a heart-whole devotion to the highest ideal a man can conceive, and this ideal it is that he recognizes and worships as eternal reality in God. It is a religion such as this alone which is capable of raising him above the animal level of mere pleasure-pain sensations and exalting him to the height of that which he worships, a Divine which exists not for happiness or profit, but which is the ultimate righteousness after which the souls of men are indeed in their heart of hearts athirst. 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.'

How often is this metaphor of thirst, the keenest of physical desires, used in the Old Testament to express man's longing for the Divine. And this Divine is to the Jew no mystic yearning after

infinity, no pantheistic and non-moral revelling in sensational states of union with the 'Absolutely Other,' no abstract *tremendum et fascinans*. It is a passionate yearning after holiness, a righteousness which can only be attained in the actual world of concrete human life, and not in the excitements of either ritual or mystical religion. 'I hate, I abhor thy feasts. Thy Sabbaths, incense and new moons' (to which might be added to-day 'thy sacraments and mystical states'), 'are an abomination unto me; I am weary to bear them. When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.'

So thunders the Absolute Moral Law in both Old Testament and New. It is in the concrete world that victory is to be won, if anywhere, and by concrete human actions that love is revealed. But this victory of godlikeness will be costly and dearly bought, and he who shrinks from pain cannot attain thereto. As Christ proclaims, 'Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.' So of each would-be disciple the Divine Righteousness still asks, 'Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' And to those who reply, 'We are able,' the answer is still, 'My cup indeed ye shall drink; but to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared of my Father.' That is, Christ holds out no thrones or their equivalents to His faithful followers. These are for those alone for whom God has prepared them. In other words, they are God's free gift and cannot be earned. The Christian must render faithful service with no eye to other reward than the cup of his Master. 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.'

As the great chalk downs were laid down by the deaths of myriads of animalculæ under the sea in long distant ages, so the higher moral progress of mankind, the kingdom of heaven which Christ preached, is to be built upon the blood of countless generations of unknown martyrs who have suffered for righteousness' sake even unto death. And the building of the kingdom of righteousness, not their own heavenly crown, must be the glory for which the martyrs lay down their lives. As the First Book of Maccabees states in grandly simple words, at a time when there was no belief in a future life

to comfort faithful Jews, 'Wherefore they chose rather to die than that they might not profane the holy covenant : so then they died.'

The Book of Job wrestles with the problem why righteousness should be so beset with pain. In the primitive world suffering was always indicative of Divine displeasure, and the naïve interpretation of early Israel, even of Isaiah, as of all the great pre-exilic prophets, looked on suffering as the invariable punishment and indication of sin, either in the sufferer or his race or his forefathers. But under the Exile it was realized that the pious Jew suffered just in proportion to his piety, not for his own sin, but for the sins of those enemies and oppressors with whom God had sent him to dwell. Some righteous purpose must underlie the sufferings of the faithful followers of God. The greatest attempt to find this purpose was made in the 'Servant Songs' of Isaiah, where Israel is represented as God's faithful servant, suffering not for his own sins, but for the redemption of the world. 'He was wounded,' say the heathen nations, 'for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed.'

Thus the great unknown prophet of the Exile pictures his own martyred nation suffering to bear witness to a higher religion and morality among the debased religion and morals of Babylon.

That the sufferings of the innocent have this redemptive value is certain. Would Christian nations to-day be filled with the same horror of the wholesale massacre known as war if only the guilty were to suffer by it ? Would the life of Christ have had the same effect upon mankind if He had died, as Buddha did, in a ripe and honoured old age ? The prophet was right in his estimate of what the martyrs of his persecuted race actually achieved in raising the religious and moral conceptions of the world. It was by their loyalty and sacrifice that Judaism was preserved to become the seed-bed of Christianity, the highest religious and moral force in the world to-day. Then, as often since that day, the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church, and proved the most living of all seeds.

The Book of Job deals with a similar theme to that of the 'Servant Songs' of Isaiah—the sufferings of the innocent ; but here the case of the individual sufferer, not of the suffering nation, is considered. Job is not a Jew. He is a Gentile of the land of Uz ; so the writer is here rising right above national limitations. It is the pains and sorrows of the whole world that are his problem, in the face of a Divine order of the universe which

is at the same time absolutely good. On any other hypothesis the problem ceases to exist. If God is a devil, or morally imperfect, if God is weak or does not exist, then the pains and torments of life can be explained as part of, or contrary to, the will of an imperfect Creator, or as the result of blind forces working in a world without a god at all. But where the Creator and Sustainer is all-powerful and all-good, as in the Jewish and Christian religions, there the problem of innocent suffering becomes acute.

The author of Job was one of the greatest religious poets and thinkers the world has seen, but he is entirely unknown. He lived in the post-exilic period and by the use of an ancient and well-known legend he endeavours to grapple with this mysterious theme, the question of human pain in a world whose omnipotent ruler is a loving and righteous God ; or, in other words, a world where the moral law rules supreme.

He begins with a Prologue, of which the scene is laid in heaven, and evolves a great cosmic drama, the tragedy of man. The theatre in which this drama is enacted is the universe itself, earth is the stage, heaven the auditorium. God is the author of the piece, mankind are the actors, Satan is the critic who adapts and revises the plot, the spectators are the innumerable hosts of the angels of God, the theme is the mysterious problem of human pain. The hero of this tragedy is Job.

The scene in heaven shows at the outset that what is at stake throughout the drama is the vindication of the moral dignity of man. Is the righteousness of Job a true righteousness ? Does he serve the moral law—that is, God—merely for what he can get out of it ? Is he only righteous because it pays ? Or is he capable of faithfulness when it does not pay, when all outward prosperity and happiness are taken away, and the easiest escape would be to curse God and die ? Satan, as critic of human values, asserts that Job can never stand the test. He is a mere self-seeker like the rest of mankind. But this God denies. In other words, the Creator is represented as trusting in the moral greatness of the human race that He has made in His own image, and His confidence is justified. Job will rise superior to all outward fortunes and manifest a wholly disinterested love of goodness, or of God, for Himself alone, without any hope of reward in this world or the next. Satan does not believe even the best of mankind to be capable of such heroism, and he is allowed to prove Job to the uttermost.

A cosmic purpose, of which the sufferer is all unconscious, is thus served by the trial of Job. And in the person of Job, man stands the test.

Alone, in the deepest misery, humiliation, and even despair, knowing no reason for his pain, no explanation being vouchsafed to him by heaven or hell, in extremest desolation, the soul of man wins the victory over suffering and death, and is rewarded by the very vision of God.

Such is the theme of this sublime poem.

The Epilogue, with its concluding return of Job to earthly prosperity, would be part of the popular legend, and as such is retained by the poet as a concession to the general level of his hearers. It is not essential, indeed, is even contrary, to the purpose of the book, the assertion of the possibility of a disinterested love and service of the Good—that is, of God.

How does the writer deal with his theme? The text of the book is obscure in many places, and there has obviously been a good deal of interference with it by later hands in the interests of conventional orthodoxy. In particular, the long and tedious Elihu speeches are a later insertion which add nothing to the argument. The beautiful chapter in praise of Wisdom also appears from its style to belong to a later period. But it is now practically agreed that the main portions of the work are by one hand, and the intention of their author is clear. In the person of Job he challenges in the most daring language the whole moral order of the Universe; he places God Himself upon His trial, and demands an answer in the name of torn and persecuted man. Like the suffering Titan of Greece, Prometheus, who hurls his defiance at the ruler of the world, while clamped immovably to his rock in the Caucasus, Job sits upon his ash-heap throughout, accompanied only by his desolate wife, the bereaved mother and partner of his fallen fortunes. The shallow cynic has often suggested here that Satan doubtless had his reasons for leaving her when he took all the rest! But as a woman writer truly observes, her one cry of agony is for the only pain in which she has no share, her husband's bodily disease. To him come his three former friends, whose silent sympathy encourages Job at last to give utterance to his grief in curses of the day on which he was born. The friends are horrified at his vehemence, and in three cycles of speeches, to each of which Job replies, offer as consolations the ordinary parrot-cries of religious orthodoxy, the omnipotence and goodness of God, the prosperity of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked, the need for repentance and humility under the well-deserved chastisements of God, till Job realizes that his moral character also is lost with everything else, since to the friends outward

prosperity is an unfailing register of spiritual merit. They are incapable of learning or of grasping what he says, and ring the changes on their conventional themes from the beginning to the end of the book. All Job's agonized assertions of innocence, all his piteous appeals to God and man, 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me,'—all the wild eloquence of his despair, merely serve to alienate them from him more and more, and finally to harden in them the conviction of his hidden guilt. So Job is driven upon his own resources to find a reason for his pain.

The dramatic movement of the book consists in the representation of the interior struggle in the soul of Job himself, and the varying moods through which he passes from the lowest depths of desperation to the heights of hope and trust. In few writings, ancient or modern, can be found a more daring criticism of the moral order. At one time no God, but a devil, seems to Job to be seated upon the throne of the world. Nor has Job any consolation in the thought of a life after death. Hardly anywhere is the life after death depicted in darker colours than it is in the Book of Job. Both good and bad alike go down to Sheol, 'to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death, a land of thick darkness, as darkness itself; a land of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.' From this land there is no return, and after death even God Himself would seek the most faithful soul in vain, for in Sheol Job cannot find contact with God. Even so the Greek martyr, Antigone, in the face of death looks for no vindication in the grave. The gods of the nether world will presumably side with the rulers of this. Yet to both Greek poet seer and Hebrew seer, from the very absence of present or future recompense, there rises the vision of an Absolute Righteousness so shining and holy that it is its own exceeding great reward. Antigone looks for the welcome of her parents and brother in the world below. Job perceives that his lifetime of communion with God as friend with friend cannot be broken now. Somewhere, somehow, that loving God of his must still exist. His face is but hidden for a moment, why Job cannot tell, but some day, even if only after death when Job can no longer hear, God will remember again the faithful servant of former days. At length he arrives at the triumphant assurance that his vindicator lives, and that even if he himself may suffer and die, one day his honour at least shall be re-established by the God whom he has loved and served all his life. Nay more, before death

he will see God: 'Yet from my flesh I shall see God, whom mine eyes shall behold and not another.' Thus the vision of God, even if but for a moment, is, for the righteous, an all-sufficient reward. With this triumphant victory of faith and trust Job's personal problem is at an end, though there follows a discussion on the darker problem of the suffering of the world at large, with a terrible picture of the prosperity of the wicked, followed by a probably still more terrible picture of the sufferings of the good. But in the later speeches orthodox piety has obviously been at work to tone down Job's most startling utterances. Finally, the long and pathetic summary of all his former glories, with a description of the blamelessness of the life he used to lead, gives an ideal picture of the life of a good man of those days, and is one of the highest flights of Hebrew ethics. It shows what righteousness meant to this Hebrew writer at least 400 years before the time of Christ. 'If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him——' Thus with the most solemn affirmation of innocence from the highest standard of Old Testament morality, Job presents himself before God to answer for his life 'as a prince' might meet his judge. The dramatic moment for God's self-revelation has arrived.

By the omission of the speeches of Elihu we come to the great poet's own work in the answer of God out of the whirlwind. Here, if anywhere, we should expect reply to Job's bitter criticisms of God's rule. What justification has the poet put into the mouth of God for the terrible sufferings of mankind of which He is believed to be the sole originator and cause?

In the speeches out of the whirlwind we find that God does not give the explanation that might have been expected from the Prologue. These speeches form some of the most sublime pieces of Nature poetry in the literature of the world. In wonderful and majestic imagery God's creation is described, the greatness of the world of earth and sea and sky which He had made long ages before Job was born—'When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.'

In the magnificence of these glorious and triumphant descriptions of Nature Job sees the very image of God. This was what omnipotence and power and wisdom really meant. This was the God whom Job had ignorantly presumed to challenge like a prince to His trial, presumed to dare to criticise and understand.

Here seems to be the Hebrew poet's attempted answer to the questioning of mankind. The

sufferer is lifted right out of the misery of his self-centred attitude towards the world, and shown the greatness and the glory which exists independently of him and over which he has no control. Is there no trace of purpose here? he seems to ask. Is there not enough wisdom and beauty and order in the visible world which man can see and which is so surpassingly great, to give him confidence to trust in the Maker of it in the face of what he cannot understand? The speeches of Yahveh from the whirlwind do not answer the problem of pain; but, as Professor Strachan says, they turn Job's mind from the problem of evil to the even greater problem of good. Job cannot account for suffering. He has dared to challenge God to His trial. In reply God challenges Job with another side of the picture, a side equally true, equally real, equally impressive, for those whose kinship with it gives them the eye to see, the wonderful vision of the good. Whence comes it? What is it? Who made it? The poet soul of Job's great author is stirred as man's perhaps may seldom have been stirred before or since by the overwhelming beauty of created things. Not for him the answer of Eastern pessimism that all is Maya, all illusion. He leaves to inferior minds, like the writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes, the pessimistic view that all is vanity. To the poet author of Job the glory of the world is too intense to be illusion. It is something beyond all vanity, something so great that even in the depths of personal pain his Job can rise to rejoice as God unrolls its splendour before his dazzled eyes. What must the maker of all this be like? he seems to ask. And in reply Job sees a vision of goodness and purpose, of wisdom and grandeur so surpassingly glorious that he bows the head in utter reverence and worship. It is not abasement, not humiliation with which Job speaks at last to God. It is 'that awed stoop of the soul' which proves to man his true kinship with the Divine. In return for his sufferings God gives to Job the vision of Nature, the garment and robe which to the Jew reveals while it conceals the very form of God. As the exultant psalmist sings:

'The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. One day telleth another, and one night certifieth another. Their sound has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.'

With the revelation of Deity in Nature the poet closes his book. God has unveiled before Job the shining problem of the good, has given him the

eyes to see and the heart to understand, and in the midst of his pain with all his soul Job rises up to worship and adore. In reverence and love he replies to his Creator-Friend :

‘I uttered that which I understood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’

After this there is little more to be said. Job has triumphed. Without a reason given, with no explanation from God or man, he has stood the test of pain and loves God still. Without any earthly hope of release and, as we have seen, with faint hope in a world beyond, Job still holds fast to his trust of the good through all the darkness that might have overwhelmed a smaller man. And in so doing he has unconsciously vindicated in the sight of heaven and earth the moral value of mankind. Man is not insignificant, man is great, and greatest of all when he feels himself of most little worth. Made in the very image of God, he can rise to heights at which even angels gaze in amazement. He cannot be crushed by human suffering and limitations. He can love goodness so greatly as to forget all human pain, or even to rejoice in it when suffered for the sake of the righteousness that he loves with all his soul. He can rise superior to the earthly things—and reach out to the highest stars, to the very union and friendship with his Maker, the Creator of earth and heaven.

Job was not the first, nor is he the last of men to pass the test. Not only in ancient Israel, but in every workhouse and hospital to-day, wherever there is sickness and sorrow and pain, there the author of Job might show the same test still being silently passed by many a poor unknown who is little aware of the immeasurable value of his work for mankind. As the general, without their knowledge, puts his best soldiers in the hottest places on the field, and as the strongest athletes are submitted to the hardest trials, so, it might be suggested, do the saints of God suffer for the uplift of mankind. Suffering, the poet of Job seems to say, has a cosmic value far beyond the order of this world. For the reader the veil is lifted in the Prologue and he is not left in the ignorance of Job. The reader knows that righteous sufferers are God’s chosen and most trusted servants. Their sorrows are a privilege and a crown. Angels watch the issue of the conflict in the arena of life. Will man under trial win his fight for God, or will he be

worsted by the pain and, turning aside, curse God and die? The value of the human race depends on the reply. And the true answer is given most often, not by the great and wealthy, the prosperous and famous in men’s eyes, but by the toilers and sufferers who lay down their lives unknown. It is they who in the sight of God redeem mankind from being mere empty profit-hunters and pleasure-seekers such as Satan would declare them to be. It is they who rise to the fulness of the stature of humanity and are worthy to be called the very children of God.

The Old Testament figure of Job is in truth a forerunner of Christ. But the New Testament was to teach mankind that the greatest beauty in the world, the highest revelation of Divinity, lies not in the splendour of external nature, however glorious, but in the human face of a Man of Sorrows, the fullest, because most personal revelation of God to man and of man to himself.

Christ endorsed the teaching of Job on the problem of pain. Suffering is not solely a punishment for sin. ‘Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, but that the works of God might be manifest in him.’

But the New Testament does not leave the problem of pain where the writer of Job left it. Christianity holds up to the world an immortal hope, a life in Christ with God, an eternal life which may begin even here and which can never end. No gloom of Sheol awaits the Christian soul, but an ever closer union with and likeness to his God. In this hope the martyrs died with joy, reaching out towards their everlasting home with the triumph and words of Paul in their hearts and ears :

‘Wherefore I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward.’

And this glory of which St. Paul speaks is no earthly glory of crowns and thrones and harps of gold. It is the shining whiteness of moral achievement, the Godlikeness or Christlikeness that is its own exceeding great reward. As the Fourth Gospel declares, ‘And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’ And knowledge of a person implies spiritual kinship, the sonship by adoption of which St. Paul speaks, the grafting into the very inmost essence of the Divine. There can be no higher reward for the soul than this.

The Book of Job might be written upon the text

of the unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews :

‘Wherefore seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.’

But the author of Job had no such future to look forward to. Job had been tried and stood the test. If joy were ever to come to him again it must come on earth or not at all. The vision of God for which he had thirsted had been granted him. He is now ready to die in peace, however dark the land of Sheol that awaits him, and anticipates Simeon’s words :

‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.’

Job’s poet does not let him die so, though to our thinking this might have made a better and a truer ending. The Epilogue rounds off the drama with poetic justice, and satisfies even the most materialistic type of hearer that the righteous will be rewarded in the end. Those that have ears to hear can do without the Epilogue, which is in itself but a parable of which the Christian doctrine of eternal life gives the deeper underlying truth.

To conclude in the words of Professor Strachan :

‘To love and serve God for His own sake, as man’s moral and spiritual ideal, and thereby

to quench the accusing spirit of sceptical cynicism, are the principles of action which are inculcated in the Book of Job, and there are none higher. They are the principles which made the Hebrews, with all their faults, the foremost nation in history, and they are the principles which make nations great to-day.’

Or as Professor McFadyen says :

‘Nothing that anyone has ever said or will ever say about the Book of Job can remotely approach the titanic impression made by the book itself. It is therefore all the more to be regretted that it is so little known.’

Such are some of the reflections aroused in the modern mind by this great and ancient book. Its permanent value consists in its faith in the moral order of the Universe in spite of all appearance to the contrary, and its exaltation of loyalty to the moral ideal above all other considerations whatsoever. It is on these qualities that the spiritual progress of mankind has always depended and will continue to depend, and it is in this faith that the moral pioneers and saviours of mankind have died and still die every day. When the New Jerusalem descends from heaven ‘as a bride adorned for her husband’ her costliest foundations will not be the jewels of Apocalypse, but the sacrifices and tears of an innumerable multitude of unknown saints. A foundation of more precious spiritual worth cannot be conceived. Against a city founded upon such a rock the evil forces of degeneration and decay will never be able to prevail. It has in it the principle of eternal life and youth.

Divine Sovereignty in Revision.

BY THE REVEREND LESLIE H. BUNN, B.A., LOUTH, Lincs.

PART of the difficulty of making explicit our conception of God arises from the fluid indecisiveness which is the present state of some of the terms traditionally employed. If ‘sovereignty’ is a word that we do not now readily apply to God, this is largely because it no longer means to us what it did. So long as ‘the ghost of the Roman Empire’ was ‘sitting crowned upon the grave thereof’ there was no difficulty. The absolute tradition of the Cæsars was carried on by the Popes and the Holy

Roman Emperors in concert or in conflict ; there was at any rate the permanent symbol of power, certainty, and finality. This symbol had become so necessary to the ordering of the world’s stability and progress that it was an easy step to attributing the same general characteristics to the God whom the human mind demands as so necessary to ultimate existence. He must be regarded as Sovereign in the full, rigid, settled sense of the term.

It is, however, a modern commonplace that

this comfortably settled state no longer obtains. 'Sovereignty' is still in our vocabulary, but with the passing of the visible universal power it has been inevitably narrowed. Each state now claims for itself what was once the prerogative of inclusive Empire. But even more important than the change in denotation is the change in connotation. Not merely have the frontiers been withdrawn; we have replaced our massive system of ramparts by a mere defenceless line of boundary posts, and that at a time of incursion and eruption when nothing is safe from violation. In other words, sovereignty, even with its diminished borders, does not mean for us that same absolute and final certainty which it once implied. This country, for example, retains a Sovereign. But he does not exercise sovereignty. He is not absolute, for although for reasons of practical policy and constitutional stability he remains where his fathers sat, it is the people themselves whom he uniquely represents who hold the power, and his sovereignty is simply that inherent in the Empire.

Sovereignty, then, in the modern idea, is vested not in an autocratic individual, but in a thinking, determining community, which may have an individual as its representative but which declines to hand over to him the right to order its life. Fascism in Italy is in striking contrast to this view, just as is Russian Bolshevism, but neither of these movements is in line with the general tendency of political theory of the last century and a half.

Undoubtedly in some form or other sovereignty is a permanent factor in human life. It is the right to direct affairs, but the long battle has been for the transfer of that right from without to within, until now it is not held as just for one to order the affairs of another. Sovereignty implies supremacy, but the modern mind denies any external supremacy which is not answered and sanctioned willingly from the inner side. In so far as sovereignty in this sense calls into action the individual will of the governed, we may find the term still useful in our quest for a definition of God.

Nevertheless, with such a changed understanding of sovereignty in human affairs, we may well hesitate to apply the term to God. It is a perilous expedient to put Him 'into commission,' having a supremacy merely derived from human consent. It may indeed be necessary for us to redistribute in thought the relative interactions of God and man, but we must retain some clear sense of God as a Reality unimpaired and still in some way supreme, even though we may need to alter our category of supremacy. We may find man's share larger than we

had thought, or God's, in any mutually satisfying relation between the two, but we must no more diminish what our soul demands in God than we must attach to man capacities beyond his constituted nature.

Finding, then, the thought of Sovereignty whether in its older or its current acceptance inadequate to express what God means to us, we turn to seek a more helpful mode. Now the emphasis of our Lord's teaching is upon the nature of God, not as autocratic Sovereign any more than as metaphysical Absolute, but as Father. This word, it would seem, should lead us straight to the heart of the mystery, but here again we find that connotation has changed in some important respects. We have outgrown the civil privilege acknowledged in Roman law, although the theory has died very slowly. In this generation, however, it is practically extinct save as a regret. The 'paterfamilias' with extended powers and cast-iron authority has virtually ceased to be. Various causes, not least of them the late War, have tended to raise a revolt. There has been an assertion of freedom, a disposition on the part of the upgrowing generation to take the bit between its teeth, and on the other side a rather helpless abdication of parental authority. This is not the occasion for a prolonged discussion of the ethics of parental control, but if we desire to use the notion of Fatherhood to apply to God we must allow for the profound change which has taken place in modern thought on this subject.

It is true that neither in the political nor in the domestic sphere has a satisfactory solution been found. There are still many questions left rather alarmingly open alike in constitutional and family relationships, and it may be long before a stabilized readjustment can be made. But the ferment of thought along both these lines must be recognized as part of the general liberal trend away from an external authority which seems to disregard personal judgment in others.

When we examine what the older theologians meant by the Divine Sovereignty we must admit that primacy of some sort was rightly held to be an inseparable attribute of God. It is the further question of the nature of that primacy that is now being tested in the category of Fatherhood. Obviously here is a term which does at the outset assert a form of primacy, that of origin, and this can never be eliminated. We are bound, however, to respect the modern view that a 'primacy of origin' does not go the whole length of conferring autocratic right. Although men are to be held responsible for their children's existence, yet so soon

as their children become able to accept responsibility themselves their parents are only indirectly responsible for their children's actions. They have been the means of reproducing in the world persons free and capable like themselves, but that does not give them the right thereupon to frustrate that freedom and deny that capacity. Surely this applies *a fortiori* to God the Producer *par excellence* to whom alone we can trace the personal characteristic which we possess.

The notion of Fatherhood, however, holds other implications of far richer ethical significance. The relation between father and child is undoubtedly more than a natural one, and it is unwarrantable to carry over the priority and subordination proper to the natural relationship and apply them without modification to relationships which are of another order. For example, it is no longer accepted without challenge that a son must always obey his father in all things simply because they are father and son. When the son has reached a certain stage of development collaboration is offered and accepted in place of obedience. If human experience has wrought out some such conception of fatherhood as this, and the religious instinct desires to apply the term to God, this sense of it must find a place in the application. We can think of God as Father in this modern sense, but with enhanced beauty and certainty, if we are prepared to make room in our thought of His Divine nature for an eager desire that the human spirit should co-operate with Him in His purposes. The co-operation will not be perfect; our experience and judgment will fail us and fail Him just as in these things we fail each other, but if He is really a Father He will rather accept our willing offers however faulty, than our unwilling obedience however mechanically faultless.

Along this line, too, there is place for some thought of a Divine Sovereignty in a sense which our modern mind can accept. Absolutely God does and must enjoy a supremacy analogous to a primacy of origin. He is the metaphysical Source, the indispensable Fountain of personality as we know it. Nothing that we can give Him can enrich Him here, nothing we can subtract can diminish this splendid eminence.

But however satisfying this may be on the metaphysical side, something is needed from the ethical and religious standpoint. He is King for us only as we attribute to Him Kingship over us. To

regard Him as Sovereign in His own right does not exhaust His greatness. Indeed, our modern constitutional theory points to the profound truth that Sovereignty is in our gift to bestow. If we will, we may have Him to reign over us; but if not, He will not. He will not abuse our freedom by coercion. He still has His absolute sphere into which we cannot intrude, but He has so made us that we can render ourselves morally impervious to Him. We do not make Him God, but we can make *our* God.

This thought drives deep. Our important dealings with God are those in which we are conscious of liberty of choice. The common habit of judging God by those circumstances which are beyond our control misses the true greatness alike of Him and of ourselves as human, which lies in the mutual understanding, with all its practical issues, possible between men and God.

In summary, then, it may be said that the growing conviction of the worth and the implications of Personality has revolutionized our conceptions both of Sovereignty and Fatherhood. It is still possible to use the former term to express the relation in which God stands to us, but to do so we are bound to employ some ideas which, though more or less naturalized to it, really have their roots in the notion of Fatherhood. In this latter conception we can find a sufficient metaphysical basis, an ultimate supremacy which while beyond question does no violence to free human prerogative. In God there must be ethical as well as metaphysical supremacy; to be moral He must not use the second to ensure the first. It is as Father that we best understand God, because in this relationship do we most naturally achieve that ideal state of complete confidence which in the realm of political sovereignty is reached, if ever, only by bitter struggle. He is inevitably our Father because He is ultimately and solitarily responsible for the existence of our spirit; but there is an inwardness to the relation which is unrealized until we have freely conceded to Him the treasure of our loving and confident sympathy which makes us glad to unveil ourselves unreservedly to Him, and helps us to take an increasing share in the unfolding of His purpose. The fulfilment of ethical relationship is that we acknowledge of choice that supremacy of good purpose from and to all eternity which belongs to God of right.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Learning his Verbs.

BY THE REVEREND STUART ROBERTSON, M.A.,
GLASGOW.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was made flesh.'—Jn 1¹, 14.

GIRLS and boys who are learning Latin at school know what is the Latin for 'word.' It is *verbum*, and we have cut off its tail and have taken it into our language as 'verb.'

We have all sorts of words—'parts of speech' we call them—and our grammar gives us names for them. A 'noun' is the name of something; an 'adjective' is a word added to a noun; a 'preposition' is a word placed before a noun; and a 'conjunction' is a word that joins words together. But there is one sort of word which has no name. It is too important. It doesn't need to be described. We just call it '*the word*,' the 'verb.' It is the backbone of the whole business. Everything hangs on it—the word, the verb.

Now I am happy to say I haven't seen an English grammar for forty years, so I don't know what the grammars of to-day say; but I can tell you what the old grammars said about the verb. I was glad to say good-bye to mine, for I hated it, as we hate lots of things that are good for us, and I laid it away with joy. But there was one thing it said which stuck to me, and which has come to mean more and more to me the longer I live. It was this: 'A verb is a word which signifies to be, or to do, or to suffer.'

When I put away my grammar I thought I was finished with learning the verbs, but I found (and you will find) that I have been learning these verbs all my life, and still haven't learned them perfectly. For life is not just getting things; it is learning 'to be, to do, and to suffer.' It is not what we have that is the important thing, but being and doing and suffering—what we *are*, what we *do*, and how we *bear* what comes to us.

The Lord Jesus had nothing—nothing at all but the clothes He stood in—nothing like what you have. When He wanted a piece of money He had to say 'Give me a penny.' An old writer in Egypt seventeen hundred years ago says, 'The Lord ate from a cheap bowl, and made His disciples lie on the ground, on the grass, and He washed their

feet with a towel about Him, the lowly-minded God and Lord of the Universe. He did not bring a silver footbath from heaven to carry about with Him. He asked the Samaritan woman to give him to drink in a vessel of clay as she drew from the well. He *had* nothing.'

But He is the Saviour of the world and the high example to men, and His Name is above every name because of what He was, what He did, and what He suffered. He was the Word, the Verb of God, being, doing, and suffering.

He *was* pure and holy and good. He *did* works of truth and kindness. He *suffered* with men, for He took their sorrows on His heart and felt them as if they were His own, and He *suffered* for men, for He took their sins on His heart and bore them on His Cross.

He was God's Word, the Verb of God, the Word become Flesh, being, doing, suffering.

We have to learn the verb with Christ. These words have to become flesh, to become alive in us. That is what life means. It will not be what we will bring in our hands, or have in our bank, that will matter at the end of our life, but what we have in heart and conscience and character, what we have learned by being and doing and suffering.

We are to Be? Like Jesus. We are to Do? The things He asks. We are to Suffer? Not on that terrible Cross, but as He did among men, feeling for others, feeling through others, and taking their sorrows on our heart. That is what 'sympathy' means; not just feeling for others, but suffering with them.

Here is what a poet has written, looking back on his life, and it will be good if we, when we come to look back, can say the same:

I have learnt 'to be'—well, a man:
How 'to do'—well, a part of my duty:
And in 'suffering,' own that the plan
Of the world is all goodness and beauty.
Still at times from the path I may stray,
And thus make the journeying rougher,
But at least I am learning the way
'To Be, and to Do, and to Suffer.'

Some of you will go to the University and by the things you learn there take a degree, and mayhap an honours degree, and have letters after your name. Some of you won't. But all of you are entered in the Great University of Life and, by the things you learn there, have the chance of

winning a degree and having at last 'W.D.G.F.S.' after your name.

Do you know what those letters mean? 'Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant.' It is the honours degree God gives to those who have followed Christ and with Him have learned the verbs 'To Be,' 'To Do,' and 'To Suffer.'

Game to the Last.

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR JONES, D.LIT., OXFORD.

'That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore.'—Eph 6¹³⁻¹⁴.

There is a phrase which we use sometimes, and which conveys something for which we have a great respect. It is the phrase 'sticking it.' When we say that, we do not mean merely going on with the thing, but going on with it when it would be quite pleasant for us to drop it. We use it, for instance, about games. I have sometimes seen, and I daresay you have, a fellow 'sticking it' grandly at Rugger. Perhaps he is one of the 'threes,' and is making a run with the ball. How the other side get on to him! You think he is done for, and his run at an end. But, out of the ruck of them, there comes a figure, still going, still in possession of the ball. It is our 'three,' who has refused to acknowledge that the other side was too much for him, and has been 'sticking it' to such purpose that he is still all there, and, very likely, will get 'a try' in a few minutes. We use it sometimes of work. Maybe there is an exam to prepare for. Well, preparing for an exam is sometimes awfully slow and difficult, and there are all sorts of temptations not to go on with it. But the girl or boy who recognizes that exams are things to meet and overcome, and who 'sticks' the long preparation, refusing to be beaten, is the one that will arrive. Why, not long ago, I had to examine a man, not a boy, and it was an oral exam, too. This particular man had not had the opportunities of some of the others, and he was not quite as good as some of them. But the plucky way in which he came up to each question, and evidently made up his mind that he would do his very best with it, won our respect. He might so easily have said: 'This is beyond me, it's no use my trying.' But he was a stickler. Some of his answers were quite wrong, and some of them made us smile, but we liked him, for he would not give in.

Now the writer of this Epistle has evidently some such idea as this in his head, only the picture which he gives is of something worse than Rugger,

and worse even than exams; it is a picture of war. Now war is a horrid, horrible thing, so horrible that we all want to get rid of it, once and for all. But, while war is so dreadful, and we do not want to get a love for warlike things, let me tell you this, that many soldiers have been simple, tender, lovable men. I met hundreds of them in the Great War, and, while war is, more or less, the fault of people in general, those men were just true and straight and good, and very fine. And I think that St. Paul was thinking of some soldier-boy of that kind. Perhaps he was thinking of one whom he had seen just once, in his many travels, or, perhaps, he was thinking of one whom he may have known, and possibly had a chance to talk to about Christ, and who, in turn, may have talked to him about some of his own adventures. At any rate, it seems to me that St. Paul had a pretty definite picture in his mind, and I am going to try to pass it on to you as it has come to me.

It is war-time, and 'at the front.' Also, we will suppose, it is night. Our soldier-lad is on sentry-go. He has his orders, which are to let no one pass him. Well, he takes over, and, for a time, all goes well. Then there is a noise. Round goes the sentry's head; he is all alert. 'Who goes there?' There is no answer, but now there is something dim to be seen, and it moves! It is some of the enemy. Our boy gives the alarm. But that is not all. He must try to hold this enemy until help comes. The enemy must not be allowed to penetrate the camp. So he goes at it. He is overpowered, they are several to one, but he does not care. It seems as if, now, he has done his utmost, but still he keeps on at it. At last, at long last, as it seems, help does come. In the end, the enemy is overcome. And then our boy, who has not been relieved of his sentry-duty yet, goes on with his work. He is faint, his nerves are a bit jumpy, perhaps he is hit, but he goes on, and, when the officer comes round, he is ready with his salute. He has 'withstood in the evil day' and, having done all, he is still standing. Or, as you would put it, he has stuck it.

Girls and boys, we hope there will not be much more need for the sort of fighting which we have been talking about. But God always, and never more than now, needs those, especially those young ones, who can withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, still stand. It is not those who begin, not those who begin and go half the way, or three-quarters of the way, but those who begin and go all the way who are of value in doing His mighty work. Are any of us guilty of not going through

with it, in the matter of dealing honestly with ourselves, or of doing our duty by other people, or towards God? It is good, of course, to withstand a bit in the evil day, but it is far, far better to withstand all the way through, and be found standing at the last, evil having battered at you, and hurt you, perhaps, but not having power to make you cease from standing. So that it becomes true of you that you did your all, and did not let even that exhaust you, but were found standing where you should be at the end.

Did you notice that my text finishes up with another 'stand'? That is very full of purpose, if I am not mistaken. St. Paul means something like this. 'You think this a good idea? You feel that it is what ought to be true of you? You mean to make it true? Well, the way to end by standing is to begin by standing. Take your stand once and for all, and that will go a long way towards your being found standing at the end.' And that is true. In the things that matter most, we gain resisting-power by taking a stand for right. That sentry of whom we were thinking could never have done what he did unless he had begun by taking his stand as a sentry. No more can you; no more can I. 'Stand, therefore,' now.

It is said of Jesus Christ that He loved His own 'unto the end.' It seems to me that that means that His love was such that, come what would, He would *never* let His loved ones go, His love was proof against everything that might tempt Him to do otherwise. That is a grand thing. And we want to be like Him in our love for humanity, and in what we do for the world. Let us ask God to help us to take our stand now, and to keep it; withstanding, as we go through life, everything that we believe to be evil, and, although perhaps knocked about in the great struggle, to be found standing at our post at the last.

The Christian Year.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

The Ascension.

'And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.'—Ac 1⁹ (R.V.).

The fact which we call the Ascension is stated or assumed by several of the New Testament writers, but only one writer, St. Luke, gives any description of it. In his Gospel he writes: 'And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven'—though the

last clause 'and was carried up into heaven' is not found in some of the most important MSS and may be a later addition. Possibly St. Luke himself invented it, for in the Acts he quite distinctly describes a physical ascent, and describes it in detail. If he did not himself actually write the passage, he embodied it in his story as a trustworthy tradition.

Now different minds will take different views of this incident. Some will say: 'If our Lord had to depart, what more natural than that He should ascend? Since men habitually think of heaven as above their heads, and since in the traditions of His own people there were stories of men caught up from earth into sky, He would in this way be giving to His departure a form not unfamiliar, and one capable of impressing itself upon His imagination.' Others, more critical, but not therefore necessarily less believing, will feel that we have no means of knowing what happened, that the New Testament description belongs rather to the region of symbol and poetry, and cannot be taken literally. That there was a real departure, that a real event happened, which made a marked impress on the minds of the disciples, they do not deny. Only they will not commit themselves to any theory of the manner of the departure. A smaller number, feeling the difficulties which gather round all the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, will tend to regard the story of the Ascension as simply the creation of the pious fancy of the disciples.

But why the *last* manifestation, why did pious fancy stop here? Why not continue the series of appearances? There is no answer, on the supposition that the Ascension was a fancy and not a fact. But grant that Jesus really did rise from the dead and show Himself to His disciples, then there is no reasonable objection in supposing that there was a last manifestation, after which He withdrew from earth. Certainly we cannot read the narratives of the Ascension without realizing that somehow the disciples knew that this was the last appearance. Nor can we deny that the New Testament writers everywhere take for granted that an important event called the Ascension happened, which had unique results for their theology, and in particular for their view of our Lord's person.

For us the thing which matters most is not that we should be able to give an exact account of what happened when our Lord ascended, but that we should understand the religious significance of the Ascension. The meaning of the fact is often more important than the fact itself.

What, then, for us to-day is the significance of the Ascension?

First, it witnesses to the reality of what we call a spiritual world. The event is in tune with the record of His post-Resurrection appearances, when He appeared and then vanished. 'Their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight'—the movement from the physical to the spiritual plane. 'Jesus cometh, the door being shut, and stood in the midst'—the reverse movement from the spiritual plane to the physical. And at the Ascension the withdrawal finally into the world of spirit. Do we at times think this to be impossible? Why should it be? Who knows what is the power of spirit over body, when spirit has free control, as it has not under the conditions of our earthly life? We creatures of physical sense, tied to earth, framing so many of our judgments out of our earthly experiences, with only a limited foothold here in the eternal, with the difficult task before us of growing less earthly and more spiritual—how difficult it is often for us to preserve our sense of the largeness of things!

The presence and reality of the spiritual world. We do need to be constantly reminding ourselves of this, and of the fact that the meaning of the universe is spiritual, and that we are passing through time to a life where things eternal will take the place of the things of time. Our task here is to make this unseen world as real and vivid as we can. We have to grow in the things of the spirit. We do not want to seek for them through occult mysteries. They are close at hand, within us, all around us. Where can we find them? On our knees, when we shut out the world and pray. In following out that noble aspiration which comes to us—comes like a flash of light from Him who dwells in light unapproachable. In quenching that natural resentment at an injury, and in being ready to forgive a human brother. In the glory of a sunset, which reveals a God of beauty; in the mystery of our own self, with its mind and will and haunting visions of things Divine. Of all this spiritual world the Ascension reminds us. It is a vivid and graphic symbol of the eternal realm, calling us to ascend with Christ. 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.'

And then, secondly, against this background of a mysterious spiritual world the Ascension sets a figure—the figure of Jesus Christ. He moves through the whole gospel story, its central and dominating personality. And at the end it is He who withdraws from the gaze of His wondering

followers. What does it mean that we fix our faith on an ascended Christ? As time went on, and successive generations of Christian thinkers tried to think out what Jesus Christ meant, what His work meant, what redemption meant, more and more did they find significance in the fact of the Ascension. In fact, so rich was the fact that they grew interested more in the meaning than in the fact itself. And that perhaps accounts in part for neglect of Ascension Day as a festival.

Lastly, let us make two points, both of them full of practical lessons.

A mysterious spiritual background of the unseen and eternal—and against it the figure of Jesus Christ. Into that unknown has come Jesus Christ, and He is the revelation of what the spiritual mystery is. He showed men what it was, to the measure of their capacity to understand Him, and He said that the mystery was a mystery of love, and that in and through time the light of the eternal was always shining. And what does that mean? It means that, as there is only one chemistry of the earth and stars, so there is only one moral chemistry for earth and heaven. Truth here is akin to truth there. Love here is of a piece with heavenly love.

Jesus Christ, and what He stood for, are the realities of that spiritual world which is our true home. Jesus, truly human when on earth, has taken His humanity with Him into the heavenly places. There is an essential kinship between the Divine and the human. The known need not be for us strange and remote.

The second point is this—that the figure of the ascended Christ speaks of power. God's purpose centres in Him. He is the fulfilment of it. All things, as St. Paul says in the Epistle to the Ephesians, 'are to be summed up' in Him. His Ascension marks His triumph. The Cross was followed by the Resurrection, the Resurrection by the Ascension. In principle the victory was complete. Henceforth throughout the ages that victory is slowly being made actual in the field of history and in men's hearts. The advance is indeed slow, and often we wonder if the victory will ever be finally won. But here comes in the assurance which the Ascension gives. Can God's purpose fail? To believe it even for a moment is to destroy the foundations of our Christian faith.

There is a Divine purpose working itself out; and Christ is that purpose personalized. It is for us to co-operate with Him. Indeed, He cannot do His work without us. If we grasp that and link ourselves to Him and His purpose, we shall realize

that the Ascension, which, as a surface view, seems to mean His absence and withdrawal from the world, is really a pledge and token of His presence. Physical absence is spiritual presence. 'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' He is present as power to reinforce our wills, to lift us into the enthusiasm of a great purpose, to help us to ascend with Him into a world rich with spiritual forces. All this, and much more, does the Ascension mean.¹

WHITSUNDAY.

The Self-Evidence of Pentecost.

'Every man heard them speak in his own language.'
—Ac 2⁴.

1. The first sermon preached in the Christian Church was a sermon having the Holy Spirit for its text, and the preacher found no difficulty in expounding his subject to a popular and nondescript audience. It did not for one moment seem to St. Peter's hearers that he was preaching over their heads or dealing with an abstruse theological dogma when he spoke to them of the Holy Spirit. Three times over the fact is emphasized that what so astonished and delighted the casual audience which came together on that first Whitsunday was the fact that each man heard the truth proclaimed 'in his own language.' It was something conveyed to them in terms and expressions with which they were entirely familiar. There was not a touch of anything foreign or strange in what the Christian witnesses were saying.

Now this spontaneous testimony is, one feels, in sharp and amazing contrast to the kind of untutored criticism that would be passed to-day by the man literally in the street, as on the first Pentecost. He is most conscious, so he tells us, of the unintelligibility of the whole doctrine. He is apt to taunt the Christian preacher with setting forth 'cold Christs and tangled Trinities.' He has not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Spirit, in the sense of a present Comforter or Strengthened. He does not even know whether to speak of the third manifestation of the Divine character as 'He' or 'it.' Is it any wonder that the hosts of the Lord move in such straggling formation, and with such seemingly halting steps go forth to battle, when the trumpet gives an uncertain sound? In *Lavengro* Borrow describes the almost magical effect that followed the utterance of certain sounds by a rough Irish smith

when speaking to a horse. 'He uttered a word which I had never heard before, in a sharp, pungent tone. The effect upon myself was somewhat extraordinary, a strange thrill ran through me; but with regard to the cob it was terrible; the animal forthwith became like one mad, and reared and kicked with the utmost desperation.' Then the smith 'uttered another word in a voice singularly modified, but sweet and almost plaintive; the effect of it was as instantaneous as that of the other, but how different!—the animal lost all its fury and became at once calm and gentle.' If such effects can follow the addressing even of a dumb animal 'in its own language,' how much more swift and telling would be the effect of allowing the Spirit to move men through a medium they could understand, and to which they could respond!

2. We should be chary and suspicious of any statement of the vital truths of our souls' salvation which does not call for at least some mental as well as moral effort on our part. 'In mystery the soul abides,' and when we are speaking of these things we cannot be expected to deal meanly with them, either in language or in thought. As Dr. Dale used to say, 'though infinitely mysterious, the revelation of the one God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit fulfils the profoundest, the richest, and the noblest conception of the Divine Life.' But where God feeds us with the loaves of the little lad we do not honour Him or satisfy any more the hunger of our souls by demanding mysterious manna. The thought of the Divine Spirit was apt to be associated with vagaries of religious experience which are wild, extravagant, and abnormal; with emotional excitement rather than with clear thinking. It was this tendency which St. Paul had to combat when he pleaded for comprehensible preaching against utterances of which no man could make anything, and when he insisted that the evidences of the Spirit are desirable things like love, joy, and peace.

3. The doctrine of the Trinity and of the Holy Spirit was arrived at and formulated by the Church, not by the way of philosophic speculation on the nature and being of God, but by the way of immediate spiritual experience. We can never go wrong when we say, 'that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.' This is the great fact which the Church joyfully celebrates this Whitsunday, that God has communicated Himself to men in ways that they can understand. The Holy Ghost is God speaking to each man in his own language. The Oriental mystic who heard the apostles speak has his counterpart in the man of

¹ V. F. Storr, in *Anglo-American Preaching*, 121.

to-day who with immediacy can catch the intimations which come from the unseen. The Greek amongst us, with philosophic bent of mind and delicate perception and love of beauty, finds that the Holy Spirit, if he will but listen, is addressing him also directly in his own language, through this love of beauty. For the scientist, with his Roman-like devotion to law and order, it is in no strange tongue that the voice of God comes to him. And for those among us of a kind of Egyptian, sphinx-like reserve, who never utter much of their mind upon these great questions, but who are guided by an innate sense of fairness, governed, as the ancient Egyptians were governed, by a conviction that the souls of men will be weighed in a scale as unswerving as Osiris's own, it is not in unfamiliar accents that the tones of the Holy Spirit come to them.

4. These are days in which we are being reminded over and over again that the world has escaped from the shackles of convention and authority. But does the demand of the age for freedom not carry with it more than the demanders realize? It means that a new freedom is granted also to the Holy Spirit. What if our formulæ and precedents, our prejudice and orthodoxy, have been acting as so many swaddling bands fettering and limiting the working of the Holy Spirit? Evidently it was not difficult for people who passed as religious, zealous pilgrims to the Temple at Jerusalem, to dodge the demands of righteousness when the message was droned to them in ecclesiastical phrase and time-worn ritual. It was when they heard the voice of God speaking conviction to them 'in their own language' that we read that they first were 'pricked in their heart.' This age which so loudly demands freedom and reality and unconventionality is going to set the Holy Spirit free as well. It was open formerly to one resisting conviction and the striving of the Holy Spirit to say that he could make nothing of such expressions as 'washed in the blood of the Lamb,' or 'vicarious sacrifice,' or 'atonement' and 'regeneration.' But he does know the meaning of brotherhood and social responsibility, of self-control and self-development, of commercial morality and business rectitude; and if he has got a heart at all, it will not be so hard for the point of the two-edged sword to prick it in days to come. At least he cannot pretend that he is ignorant of his native tongue, and the Holy Spirit is able to speak in those accents as well as the loftier language of theology and philosophy.

'To every man,' says Stevenson, 'there comes at

times a consciousness that there blows through all the articulations of his body the wind of a Spirit, not wholly his.' The only unforgivable sin is that of the man who closes the windows of his being to the incoming of this viewless power. The unforgivableness is not arbitrary, it is rooted in the nature of things. For we gradually poison ourselves if we breathe nothing but our own vitiated atmosphere. And if a man do but open door and window, the Guest comes in and makes His abode—as the bloom of health upon the soul and the perpetual inspiration of the life.¹

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

The Great Companion.

'Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'—Mt 28²⁰.

There are a great many ways in which men are lonely. Sometimes it is the physical absence of loved ones. There is the loneliness of lack of sympathy. There are plenty of people about, but the flash of the comradely eye and the sense of the nearness of the comradely heart are absent. There is the loneliness of the selfish man. He has no end of intimate relationships in business and in society. But gradually it comes home to him that none of these people of whom he sees so much really cares about him. In spite of the round of busy activity together, and the contact of the hours of recreation and pleasure, he is a solitary man. His spirit moves alone through the days and the nights. Then there is the loneliness of hostility. A man is fighting for a forlorn hope, and as he stands faithful in the hard hour he feels the strange loneliness which comes when the eyes which might be bright with fellowship are, in fact, cold with disapproval. There was a day in Boston when it seemed to one of Boston's sons that those who might have been his dearest friends had been turned by the slavery contest into bitterest foes.

It is in a world like this, with so many kinds of loneliness, that the Master promised to be with His disciples. He gave them a great task, and as they set about its accomplishment they might rest with comfort in the knowledge that He would be with them always, even to the end of the world. In

¹ H. L. Simpson, in *Ascension and Whitsuntide Sermons*, 166.

truth, in an even more intimate sense than these words declare, He is the Great Companion always near to men and women and little children even when they least realize His presence.

1. He is *the Companion of our thoughts*. As a matter of fact, the little world in which we do our thinking is a much more important world than we realize. We always say a thing in our mind before we say it with our lips. We always do a thing in our mind before we do it with our hand. And so the man who is lord of his thoughts is king of his life.

Many a man does things in his mind which he feels sure he would never do in any other way. And many a man thinks things he feels sure he would never say. But all the while there is an unseen Presence. He lives this life in his own mind with the Great Companion always near. Mrs. Wharton says of a great mother, 'She overheard her son's thoughts.' Not even the greatest mother can always do that. But the Master Himself always overhears the whole silent conversation of the mind with itself. And so He knows us with that astonishing insight from which no secrets are hid. But the unseen Guest may be made the seen and welcomed friend. We may rise in the morning glad of His nearness and with the first morning prayer committing our minds to His keeping. We may meet the problems of the day remembering His presence, and at last every thought may be coloured and ennobled because we live in the daily sense that He is with us.

2. The Master is also *the Companion of our words*. There is such a thing as a life whose speech is set to the music of a constant consciousness of His presence. Emerson refers in one of his poems to 'the manners of the sky.' There is such a thing as the manners growing out of the consciousness of the august and friendly Presence. There is a kind of speech subtly influenced by the awareness of the Great Companion. A good deal that men say is really dictated by the people they meet, and the experiences through which they pass. An adroit man does not find it hard to get a good many people to say just what he wants them to say. If a man does not watch closely, his speech is merely the mirror of his environment. The consciousness of the nearness of Christ gives a new background, a new standard, a new stimulus, and a new inspiration. There are a great many things a man does not say because of his invisible Friend. There are a great many things a man does say because of that high prompting. The fine old phrase, 'His conversation is in

heaven,' expresses something of the meaning of all this.

Men go to no place where the Great Companion does not follow them. And there is no difficult or intricate or ugly situation which comes to the point where it crystallizes into speech without His understanding apprehension. There is infinite sympathy as well as infinite nearness. There is infinite comprehension as well as a perpetual and insistent and noble demand. Professional life, business activities, and all the manifold processes of statesmanship come to the point of speech under the scrutiny of this constant Listener to the words of men.

3. The Master is *the Companion of our deeds*. Our thoughts deepen into feeling. They leap through our lips in energetic speech. They harden at last into the steel strength of deeds. And as what we are becomes what we do, the Great Companion stands at our side. There are deeds which are more the thoughtless expression of nervous energy than the deliberate expression of intention. There are deeds which take their colour from our surroundings. For men, like chameleons, often wear the protective colouring which makes it hard to distinguish them from the other men about them. 'Everybody does it' seems to many people the sufficient justification for their actions. There are deeds in which the slowly maturing experience of years, the maturing processes of thought, the crystallizing decisions after countless moral struggles, put their whole meaning into decisive action. And all the while the Great Companion is waiting, ready to save us from our own carelessness, ready to rescue us from our environment, and ready to deliver us from evil intentions into that goodness of purpose which is the safety of the soul.

Blessed is the man who does his thinking in constant consciousness of the nearness of the Great Companion. Blessed is the man who speaks with a deep awareness of the presence of the invisible Listener. Blessed is the man whose action expresses a conscious companionship with the living Christ.

This acceptance of the nearness of Christ, so that it becomes a thing we choose and accept and love, brings us nearer to all other human beings. For nearness to God means nearness to all the other men and women and little children in the world. The heart of loneliness is alienation. And the man who gladly practises the presence of Christ has the heart of a friend as he moves about the turbulent town, the little village, and the open country.

His personal experience of fellowship with Christ is the beginning of a new social experience with men.¹

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Revelation in History.

'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'—Is 55^{af}.

The gospel of Christ is neither a philosophy nor a law nor a system of worship, but a life which is Divine as well as human, revealed through life to mankind and to men. That life is complete in one sense, for the Son of Man has long ago ascended where He was before. Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more. The days of His flesh are ended, and He sitteth now at the right hand of the throne of God.

But in a higher sense the revelation is hardly yet begun. The infinite fullness of that life is what no one man or nation or age of the world can realize. Even the Divine Teacher can only reveal it gradually, in an infinite variety of dealings with mankind and with men. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; yet not the same to Jew and Gentile, Greek and Roman, English and Japanese, to our fathers and ourselves. He is the same power of life to all that truly come to Him; yet that power is quite as much revealed as limited by a vast variety of race and country and historical and personal circumstances. The same Lord and Saviour is rich in mercy to all that call upon Him; but we see Him from an infinite variety of points of view.

But leaving on one side as far as may be the varieties of race and climate and personal character, let us speak more generally of the revelation of the Life to men through history. Turning to history, we see our text blazoned on every page of it, that the thoughts of God are not like our thoughts, and our ways are not His ways. The apostles themselves who walked with Jesus were so far from understanding Him that they persisted in looking for an earthly kingdom, and strove for a place in it the very night before the crucifixion; and even the enlightenment of the Spirit only just overcame their slowness to receive the mystery of the call of the Gentiles. So again in the fourth century, when the patience of the saints had at last overcome the rage of the persecutors, and a

long prospect of peace and prosperity seemed to lie before the Churches, we cannot wonder if Constantine's bishops were ready to cry, 'This is the kingdom of God.' But even then destruction was upon them, and in a few more years the ancient world was overthrown. Pass on to the sixteenth century. Rome sat again as a queen, and said, 'I shall see no sorrow.' She had overcome the restless North at last, and given the flesh of her fellow-servants the heretics to something worse than the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. She was building the dome of St. Peter's as her memorial for ever—building with the price of sin, when Christ came suddenly and cut her in sunder, and appointed her portion with the hypocrites.

We have no need to envy the men who saw the face of Christ with the eyes of sense, and heard His gracious words with their outward ears. They were not the better for knowing Him after the flesh, neither are we the worse for knowing Him after the Spirit. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing, though it were the flesh of Christ. It is but the text from which His Spirit preaches to successive generations, and His teaching is the unfolding of the mystery of the ages with a clearness that increases as the centuries lengthen that separate us from the carnal presence of our Lord. 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.' We can often read something of it in the light of history. What, then, did the Spirit say to the church of Israel, the church of Pharisees and Sadducees, of Gamaliel and of Ananias the whited wall? That the Gentiles were their brethren in Christ, and that Israel itself would gain by their admission a better liberty than any that Barabbas or Judas of Galilee could offer. They would not listen; and therefore the Romans came and took away their place and nation. What did He say to the Romans themselves in the fourth century? That the barbarians were their brethren in Christ, and partakers with them of His promise. They would not listen; and therefore these same barbarians came in like a flood and overthrew the Roman Empire. What was His message to the Latin Church of the sixteenth century? That the nations of northern Europe were their brethren in Christ, and no longer needed to be kept in leading strings by a visible catholic Church of Latin sectarianism. They would not listen; and therefore Europe was rent in sunder to this day, and the leadership of Christian thought was shifted to the North. And now what does the Spirit say to modern England? We need no prophet among us to read some of the writing on

¹ L. H. Hough, *The Renaissance of Religion*, 137.

the wall. That the outcasts of England are our brethren in Christ, and the victims of our social system are children of God as well as we. We have cared far too much for this world's wealth and this world's fashions, and even the good gifts of culture and learning have too often helped to puff up our pride. It is not enough to offer them charity, or justice, or political rights. Nothing will suffice but a welcome in Christ which the man of the world will never give; and nothing short of this will heal the discords of the State, and avert the war of classes which darkens the horizon of the whole civilized world. So much of the Spirit's message we can safely read by the Light of Scripture and history, and the rest will be revealed to us in due time, if we are willing to receive it. When we turn to history, we find that God seems to reveal Himself to nations chiefly in their trouble and distress.

But why is this? Let us look to history again and see. It is on a stubborn and rebellious generation that the affliction comes. If men prefer their sin to the Spirit's teaching, that sin will find them out. They are quite free to disobey if they like. Meanwhile God gets His work done whether we are willing to be labourers with Him or not; and if we refuse, the loss is ours. If the Jews of our Lord's time had been willing to put away their hatred of the Gentile, Jerusalem need not have been destroyed. Had the Romans chosen to overcome

their scorn of the barbarian, he would have been proud to serve their glorious Empire. So too, if we refuse to lay aside our pride and lose our class divisions and our party hatreds in the love of Christ, England also will have to go the way of Israel and Rome, for there is no respect of persons with God.

Once more, the thoughts of God are not our thoughts, neither are our ways His ways. Our systems are like the stately icebergs that plough their way for awhile through the sea, glittering with rainbow colours in the sunshine. But the waters pour down their sides in cold cascades, and soon they shall vanish away, and the face of the deep shall know them no more. The thoughts of God are infinite and changeless as the azure sky. The covenant of the Lord is from everlasting, and His counsel shall endure for ever. It is He that rules the tossing sea of this world's wickedness, and causes the Pharaohs and Sennacheribs to do His will, and accomplish the thing He would have done, and to sum up not all men only, but all things in Christ, from whom they came, in whom they consist, and to whom they are moving as their final end. And His will is to have mercy on all men.

May He of His infinite mercy strengthen us to hear His voice and serve His will in our own generation.¹

¹ H. M. Gwatkin, *The Sacrifice of Thankfulness*, 15.

The New Physics and Religious Thought.

BY THE REVEREND J. H. MORRISON, M.A., BUCKSBURN, ABERDEEN.

WEYL, in his great mathematical treatise on *Space, Time, and Matter*, says, 'In our time there has been unloosed a cataclysm which has swept away space, time, and matter, hitherto regarded as the firmest pillars of natural sciences, but only to make place for a view of things of wider scope and entailing a deeper vision.'² These words are no exaggeration, but a sober description of the cataclysmic change which has taken place. If one may use the expression, physics has begun a new innings, and all the signs indicate that it is going to be a big innings.

This revolution is destined to have a profound influence in every field of thought, though it will take years, probably generations, to work out all its

bearings. Professor Muirhead has expressed regret³ that idealist philosophers, having in general had no training in physics, are but ill-equipped to deal with the situation which has arisen, and it will be freely granted that theologians are in no better case. None the less, it is incumbent on us to endeavour as best we may to attune our thinking to the new modes of thought, lest haply some day we wake up to find that we are using terms which have grown obsolete and categories which have been discarded.

Special points of interest in the new physics may be said to gather round Relativity and the Quantum Theory, mysterious words which have

² P. 2.

³ *Contemporary British Philosophy*, i. 320-2.

begun to make their way into the popular speech, without conveying much meaning to ordinary minds. The former deals with the structure of the world; the latter is concerned with the ultimate stuff of which the world is made. Let me venture a few elementary remarks on each.

I. RELATIVITY.

Relativity, as applied to Einstein's work, is somewhat of a misnomer, for his whole effort is to get rid of relativity. Relativity simply means that things look different when viewed from different standpoints, and especially when the observer and the object are in motion relatively to one another. A penny looked at sideways appears not a circle but a narrow strip. The telegraph poles move in swift procession past the carriage window; the sun and stars circle through the sky. This individual element enters into all our perceptions, and we learn, in a rough and ready way, to correct it in some degree. Einstein's endeavour, to put it in a nutshell, was to cancel out this element, and to find a way of stating physical laws in a form common to all observers. And this he brilliantly accomplished.

The most interesting of all points would be to determine just whereabouts we are in the universe, and how we are moving. The famous Michelson-Morley experiment was an ingenious attempt to find this out. The velocity of light is known, and is a constant. That is, a ray of light never slows down like a spent arrow. Well then, let us measure the speed with which it strikes on us, and we may discover whether we are moving towards the light or away from it, and at what speed. The experiment was sufficiently refined to have served its purpose, but nothing could be detected. Under all conditions light came along at the same velocity. The consequence of this is that there is no possibility of telling at any moment how we are moving relatively to the ether. Nobody can say to his neighbour in an absolute sense, 'I am at rest. It is you who are moving.' Nobody's standpoint, except in some restricted sense, is superior to anybody else's. All our standpoints are equally relative.

To explain the negative result of the Michelson-Morley experiment, Fitzgerald suggested that bodies in motion suffer a certain contraction of length varying with their velocity, and Lorentz worked out a formula to express exactly this assumed contraction. This, of course, was just an *ad hoc* solution, unsupported by any reasoning,

but simply adopted for practical purposes. It fell to Einstein to confer upon it a new and startling significance. For the first part of his epoch-making work was to take the formula of Lorentz and to show that it is demonstrably true of all uniform motion, though in the case of slow motion it cannot be detected by experiment. His proof is sufficiently simple to be followed by any one who has an elementary knowledge of geometry. The result may be very roughly put in this way. If a body is in motion its length is multiplied by one minus a fraction, the numerator of which is the square of its speed and the denominator the square of the speed of light. Obviously the speed of light is so incomparably great that in most cases the fraction becomes infinitely small and is negligible. The diminution in length, it should be added, is exactly balanced by an increase in time according to the same formula. This would mean, to use an illustration of Eddington, if a man were flying overhead in an aeroplane at one hundred and sixty-one thousand miles a second (five-sixths the speed of light), he would appear about three feet long, and his time about twice as slow as ours, 'as though time had forgotten to go on.' Eddington¹ has some interesting reflections as to what would happen if one could attain to travel with the speed of light. Both the space-unit and the time-unit become infinite. The traveller waits for the next minute, which never comes. 'So long as he travels with the speed of light he has immortality and eternal youth.'

What Einstein had so far accomplished was to provide a formula which would give the same measurement for all observers, no matter how they were moving, so long as their motion was uniform and in straight lines. This is his Restricted Principle of Relativity, which was made public in 1905.

It will be observed that when motion is included, the idea of time is necessarily brought in. It was there from the first, only we chose to ignore it for certain purposes, and in so doing, as it now appears, we grievously erred. 'Time and space are never separated in nature, and we have no right to separate them in our theories which are supposed to represent nature.'² The consequences of this are far-reaching. Henceforth we must deal, not with *things* but with *events*. The unit of reality is not a point in space but a minimal event in space-time.

To the mathematician Minkowski belongs the honour of working out in detail the laws of the four-

¹ *Space, Time, and Gravitation*, 26.

² Bolton, *The Theory of Relativity*, 7.

dimensional space-time continuum, and Einstein has acknowledged that without his work 'the general theory of relativity' would not have got beyond long clothes.¹ Measurements in three-dimensional space are made in terms of the square of the length plus the square of the breadth plus the square of the height. Minkowski was able to show that the four-dimensional continuum required the addition of the square of the time, *but introduced under a minus sign*. Accordingly, to put his co-ordinates on all fours, he assumes an imaginary time, which is equal to real time multiplied by the square root of minus one. 'It is not very profitable,' Eddington remarks,² 'to speculate on the implications of the mysterious factor $\sqrt{-1}$, which seems to have the property of turning time into space.' But one cannot help regarding it with the greatest possible curiosity, especially as Eddington himself admits that 'that minus sign is the secret of the differences of the manifestations of time and space in nature.' It is becoming customary to say that time is the fourth dimension. It might be truer to say with Maeterlinck³ that eternity is the fourth dimension. Time is our imperfect way of conceiving the fourth dimension, it is the shadow cast by the fourth dimension upon our three-dimensional world. Any three-dimensional body passing through a plane would be represented on the plane as a time-like succession of events, which would be the only way in which a two-dimensional being could represent a solid to himself. So it would appear that time is the only way in which the fourth dimension is apprehensible to three-dimensional beings like ourselves, and the surd $\sqrt{-1}$ may be the mathematical way of expressing the fact that the fourth dimension is essentially inconceivable by us.

We come now to the general principle of relativity, which Einstein published in 1915. Under the restricted principle he had dealt only with straight lines and uniform motion. But obviously the world is full of all sorts of curves, and its principal motions are not uniform but accelerated, as in gravitation and the rotation of planets. To reduce all these to one system was an immensely more difficult task. In this task Einstein was aided by the work of certain great mathematicians of the nineteenth century, particularly Riemann, who had shown that space might be spherical. Einstein, basing himself on Riemann's geometry, was able, by a superhuman effort of mathematical genius, to work out a set of equations which would

produce complete unity of measurement, eliminating all relativity. In other words, if two observers, no matter where they stand or what their motions are relatively to one another, make each his own independent measurements, then if these two sets of measurements be corrected according to Einstein's formula, the answer will be the same in both cases. We thus at last reach a figure which is completely independent of the individual standpoint. It should be borne in mind that time is involved in this calculation as well as space, so that we have now a formula for connecting any two events in the space-time continuum.

We shall not attempt here to elucidate the mystery of the space-time continuum, in which matter is represented as a wrinkle, so that in the neighbourhood of matter space is non-Euclidean but becomes a curve in the first degree as it approaches infinity. We may pass by Einstein's argument that space is spherical, unbounded but not infinite. These speculations may be left to the mathematicians. But we, at least, must accustom ourselves to this new view of the universe as an indissoluble complex of space and time. The world is not static but dynamic, a world in flux. It is continually on the move, with an inconceivably intricate power of self-adjustment. If our perceptions were fine enough, we should see that, whenever we make the slightest movement, the whole world readjusts itself to meet the new situation. This is not fancy but sober science, and it is extraordinarily suggestive.

II. THE QUANTUM THEORY.

The Quantum Theory, though considered by those most competent to judge to be even more revolutionary than relativity, may perhaps be treated more briefly. As is now generally known, the old idea of the solid indestructible atom has completely vanished. The atom is now resolved into its constituents of positive and negative electricity. The phenomena connected with radio-activity could only be explained by the break up of the atom and the radiation of its enormous electrical energy. The molecules of the different chemical elements are constructed of these electrical units held together in equilibrium according to various patterns of complexity. The limit of complexity seems to have been reached in uranium, and the phenomena connected with radium indicate a breaking down from uranium towards lead, that is, from the more complex to the less. It is as if the inorganic world had reached in uranium a

¹ Einstein, *Relativity*, 56.

² *Op. cit.* 48.

³ *The Life of Space*, 85.

degree of complexity which it could not continue to maintain, as if the tide of inanimate nature had touched high-water mark and was now on the ebb. This is a deeply significant fact which should be carefully noted, for it reveals a process of devolution in the inorganic world, the opposite of evolution. To this we shall return presently.

Bohr's theory of the architecture of the atom is generally accepted. According to it, the atom consists of a nucleus of positive electricity balanced by negatively charged electrons which revolve round it in various orbits. This theory has been worked out in great detail and is supported by many exquisite experiments. A complication arose when it was discovered by Planck that an atom does not radiate energy uniformly but in little spurts or pulsations, which are always multiples of a certain fixed quantity known as Planck's constant. To meet this new fact Bohr adapted his theory by postulating that whenever an atom receives or radiates energy, it means that an electron instantaneously jumps the rails to a wider or a narrower orbit.

On this theory two remarks may be made. People are beginning to get into the habit of saying that the architecture of the atom is a model on a small scale of the solar system. This is very loose talk. If the earth, besides revolving round the sun, were to change its orbit erratically, jumping suddenly inwards towards the sun till we were scorched, then jumping instantaneously outwards to an immense orbit where we were frozen solid, and if all the other planets behaved in the same way, then you would have something resembling what is supposed to go on inside the atom. The second remark is that Bohr's theory with its orbits and its jumps, beautifully constructed and strongly supported as it is, begins to be too intricate to be credible. It has the appearance of an *ad hoc* theory, like the Ptolemaic system with its ten crystal spheres. One is therefore disposed to look favourably on the recent theories of Heisenberg and Schrödinger, who postulate a sub-æther in which the electron is a kind of diffused presence capable of manifesting itself at various points. The atom, according to this view, is simply a mysterious, utterly unexplored *locus* out of which there come measurable spurts of energy or *quanta* of action.

Now the disconcerting thing about the Quantum Theory is that it seems to contradict continuity. It loosens all the joints of the framework of the world, and throws the very elements into a mad dance. Nothing is left but vibrations, as impalpable as a musical note, as evanescent as a colour.

Nature, it used to be said, never makes a jump. Now, it would appear she makes nothing else. Nor can any one predict just when or where or why she will make the next jump. Even Bertrand Russell concedes that the Quantum Theory 'seems to show that nature has a kind of foresight, and also knows the integral calculus,'¹ and again that 'one might, more or less fancifully, attribute even to the atom a kind of limited free will.'² Eddington's weightier conclusion is that 'in this reconstruction all the determinism is removed from the laws of physics, the apparent determinism is found to be merely high probability. . . . The new quantum mechanics contains only laws which decide the odds; it apparently has no cognizance of any factors deciding what actually will happen. In the old conflict between free will and predestination, it has hitherto seemed that physics comes down heavily on the side of predestination. The quantum theory has entirely removed this bias.'³

III. SOME REFLECTIONS.

What influence are these new theories likely to have upon the thought of our time? That is an exceedingly difficult question. It will take years to work out the implications of these theories, and generations to root them in the common mind. Yet ultimately they will become part of our mental furniture, just as the Copernican system has done. That is to say, just as we are now able without difficulty, contrary to all the evidence of our senses, to imagine the earth revolving round the sun, so men will come in time to think of the world in terms of *quanta* of action in a space-time continuum. With what results in human thought, who can tell? One could well imagine that the idea of relativity, if it came to obsess the public mind as evolution has done, might become a powerful weapon of scepticism, leading men to argue that there is no absolute truth, no one standpoint superior to any other, but each one relative to the observer. One could also imagine that the new theory of matter might lead the materialist to argue that matter is so wonderfully constituted as, by its own inherent power, to be capable of anything. Doubtless the most diverse systems of thought will continue to be built up. One may perhaps venture to indicate, very tentatively, some directions in which thought seems to be moving.

(a) A most notable change is taking place in the

¹ *ABC of Atoms*, 151.

² *Outline of Philosophy*, 311.

³ Eddington in *Nature*, 26th Feb. 1927, p. 328.

attitude of the scientific mind. It is no longer, as in the nineteenth century, confident and dogmatic, but is humble, reverent, expectant. The wonder of things is felt to be infinitely magnified, the mystery of the world deepened. 'It is impossible,' says Whitehead, 'to meditate on time and the mystery of the creative passage of nature without an overwhelming emotion at the limitations of human intelligence.'¹ The physicist does not know what he is dealing with. He is striving to master the conception of a world of four dimensions, and he knows that very possibly the world is of n dimensions. He has carried his analysis of matter almost beyond the limit of human imagination, yet he comes no nearer to the end. He measures certain things, but he has no means of knowing how much is escaping through the meshes of his net. 'The problem of matter,' says Weyl, 'is still wrapped in deepest gloom.'² The observer can note certain effects, but what the thing itself is completely eludes him. His knowledge, says Eddington, is only an empty shell, like the knowledge one might get of chess by reading a list of figures representing the moves without having any idea of what a chess-board and chessmen were like. It is, says Bertrand Russell, such poor knowledge as one might get of music by reading the score without ever having heard a note.

(b) Natural law has fallen from its high estate. It has been stripped of its authority and exposed as 'a concealed convention, plastered on to nature by our love of what we, in our arrogance, choose to call rational.'³ Bertrand Russell remarks sarcastically, 'The theory of relativity has shown that most of our traditional dynamics, which was supposed to contain scientific laws, really consisted of conventions as to measurement, and was strictly analogous to the "great law" that there are always three feet to a yard.'⁴ Whitehead is no less severe. He speaks of scientists framing arbitrary laws of Nature which 'were empirically observed, but for some obscure reason were known to be universal. Any one who in practice or theory disregarded them was denounced with unsparing vigour. This position on the part of scientists was pure bluff.'⁵ Elsewhere he says, 'The simple security of the old orthodox assumptions has vanished. . . . Heaven knows what nonsense may

not to-morrow be demonstrated truth.'⁶ This may seem a disquieting conclusion, and obviously it might be made the instrument of a devastating agnosticism, but religiously it is a liberating gospel. Too long and too abjectly have we bowed to the dogmatism of the scientist, as if his latest theory were the final truth. It is time we stood erect upon our own feet. 'Interfering with natural law' simply means interfering with our imperfect notions of how the world is constituted, and when that is understood it becomes amusing to assert dogmatically that our notions must not be interfered with. What law has been more confidently asserted to be universal than the law of gravitation, yet to a four-dimensional being gravitation, as we know it, would simply not exist. He might not even be conscious that we had formulated such a law, and if it came to his knowledge he would doubtless think it ridiculously crude. If Newton had been born in a non-gravitational field (inside Einstein's box, for instance) the problem of the falling apple would never have arisen, though probably his genius would have formulated some entirely different law to explain why the apple did *not* fall. We cannot escape the conviction, doubtless, that there must be some impressive orderliness of the universe which manifests itself to our minds as natural law, but how far the validity of these laws reaches, how far they may be modified, or even to our minds abrogated, in higher spheres we have no means of knowing, and to make dogmatic assertions is, as Whitehead says, 'pure bluff.'

(c) The old dogmatic materialism has been hard hit by the new physics. It was a bold creed, amounting in brief to the assertion that there is nothing in the world but what can be measured by a footrule and a clock. It had its citadel in physics, and now it would seem the citadel has been evacuated. 'What is the use of talking about materialism,' says Eddington, 'when you don't know what material is?'⁷ And similarly Whitehead, 'What is the sense of talking about a mechanical explanation when you do not know what you mean by mechanics?'⁸ Strange language for physicists! This would appear to be the most kaleidoscopic change in the whole picture, the most dramatic overturn in the history of modern thought.

Matter, as formerly conceived, has evaporated. Instead of the hard little bricks of which the world was built, the tiny billiard balls called atoms, we are left with nothing but infinitesimal whirlpools of electricity. And it cannot be too clearly under-

¹ *Concept of Nature*, 73.

² *Space, Time, and Matter*, 311.

³ Bertrand Russell, *ABC of Relativity*, 227.

⁴ *Op. cit.* 170.

⁵ *Science and the Modern World*, 227-8.

⁶ *Op. cit.* 166.

⁷ *Gifford Lectures*, 1.

⁸ *Science and the Modern World*, 240.

stood, there is nothing *solid* (in the old sense) at the heart of them. 'Elementary particles of matter,' says Einstein, 'are in their essence nothing else but condensations of the electro-magnetic field.'¹ And Weyl says, 'There is no longer a meaning in speaking of the same portion of matter at different times. . . . The electron is an energy-knot which propagates itself in empty space in a manner no different from that in which a water wave advances over the surface of the sea. There is no one and the same substance of which the electron is composed at all times.'² In other words, the existence of a piece of solid matter is like the playing of a tune, or the vibrations which cause a colour or a light to shine. A stone is nothing but an aggregate of electrical energy, held in superb equilibrium, with pulsations that never cease.

From this, it is obvious that the problem of the relation of matter and mind, body and spirit, has been fundamentally altered. It used to be supposed that mind and matter were essentially and eternally diverse. Matter had the attribute of extension, mind the attribute of thought. To that extent men on either side assumed that they knew what they were talking about. Now the physicists have made the revolutionary declaration, 'We do not know what matter is, but as far as we can see it cannot be expressed in terms of extension but in terms of energy.' It would be vain for mental philosophers and theologians to go on talking as if this tremendous concession had not been made. If matter is now defined in terms of energy, how else is mind to be defined? It would seem as if the gap between mind and matter were being filled up. Eddington says, 'The 19th century physicist felt that he knew just what he was dealing with when he used such terms as matter and atom. . . . Now, we see that physics has nothing to say as to the inscrutable nature of an atom. . . . There is nothing to prevent the assemblage of atoms forming the brain from being itself a thinking machine *in virtue of that nature which physics leaves undetermined and undeterminable*. Because we see that our precise knowledge of certain aspects of the behaviour of atoms leaves their intrinsic nature as transcendent and inscrutable as the nature of mind, so the difficulty of interaction of matter and mind is lessened. We create unnecessary difficulty for ourselves by postulating two inscrutables instead of one.'³

This points in the direction of the idealism which maintains that mind and matter are not two

different things arbitrarily joined, but are aspects of the same reality on different planes. It would appear to have a direct bearing on the doctrine of the Resurrection. Some theologians, whose thinking is more Greek than Christian, would fain leave no place for anything but pure spirit in the kingdom of God. To them the body is an offence, the bodily resurrection of our Saviour incredible, human destiny is to be expressed only in terms of the immortality of the soul, and the eternal world is a state where all suns and stars have been obliterated. 'A generation ago it was customary to say that heaven was a state and not a place, the implication being that the life after death was in time and not in space. Einstein has, however, demonstrated that space and time form a single complex, which we arbitrarily break up in our thought. We have no right to postulate that in the world to come part of this complex will be destroyed while the other part remains intact.'⁴ Personally, the writer has always instinctively resented the view that God's wonderful world of Nature would in this summary way be scrapped. Now he feels he has the support of physics itself in firmly repudiating it. Nobody knows what potencies are hid in matter, or how far it is capable of being etherialized; nobody can tell how close is the link that binds together body and soul, nor how necessary to the fullness of the soul's life the body may be. Nobody can set limits to the transformations which the body may undergo; nobody is qualified in the name of science to challenge the great hope that the Lord Jesus Christ 'shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.'

(d) Finally, a few words may be added about the process by which the world has come to be. It is evident that the theory of evolution will require to be profoundly modified in the light of the new physics. Professor J. A. Thomson says, 'The prodigious recent advances in chemistry and physics have not yet had their full effect on biology, which must cease to be so orthodoxly Daltonian. Thus it is beginning to be suspected that X-rays may have played, and may still play, their part in provoking variations in organisms. As the standard of scientific scepticism has risen, the evolutionists have become more and more dissatisfied with the genealogical tree that grew luxuriantly in the warmth of early Darwinian enthusiasm.'⁵

¹ *Side Lights on Relativity*, 22.

² *Space, Time, and Matter*, 202.

³ Eddington in *Science, Religion, and Reality*, 208.

⁴ Bishop Barnes, *Speech at Church Congress*, 5th Oct. 1928.

⁵ *Glasgow Herald*, July 1928.

Professor Soddy, perhaps the greatest authority on chemistry, has pointed out that there is not the slightest trace of an upward evolution in the inorganic world. On the contrary an opposite process of devolution is going on, and 'we know more about the devolution of matter,' says Soddy, 'than we know about the evolution of species.' To extend the ideas of orderly progressive evolution to the inanimate world is 'the merest obsession,' it is to 'stultify the fruits of learning and make of real knowledge a fantastic whim.'¹ Any theory of the world-process worth considering must account for the descent of uranium to lead, as well as for the ascent of the amoeba to the vertebrate. The breakdown of the chemical elements suggests to Bertrand Russell the speculation that 'perhaps the universe has long cycles of alternate winding up and running down. If so, we are in the part of the cycle in which the universe (or at least our portion of it) runs down.'² Whatever may be thought of such speculation, the facts have to be accounted for, and not ignored.

Turning for a moment to the future, the confidence with which the religious exponent of evolution assures us of a glorious upward destiny of the human race and an unbroken evolutionary march through all the ages of eternity, is a thing to marvel at. Heaven save us from making gods of the work of our own minds. These laws of unbroken evolution and everlasting continuity are of human origin, but now they tyrannize over the mind of man and stifle independent thought. Let it be firmly asserted that there is simply no scientific evidence as to what the future course and ultimate end of things will be. If all the science in the world cannot foretell when a single atom will make its next jump, is it to be thought competent to foretell what the whole travail of creation will bring forth? There may come a sudden change, as easily as a thaw comes in spring. Some mighty force utterly beyond our ken may at any moment intervene. There may be a cataclysmic end of this present world, as the New Testament forecasts. Science has not a word to say in contradiction. And to profess a knowledge of the conditions of a future life, to assume that there is a law compelling life for evermore to shape itself according to our ideas of continuity, is merely an idle dream.

The revolutionary upheaval of the new physics is a summons to liberate our minds from the grooves of conventional thinking. This is a far more un-

derful world than was formerly supposed. Dead matter has come alive in the physicist's hands. The very stones are pulsing with energy. Their existence is an amazing equilibrium, maintained by an inconceivable rapidity of motion. It is a world where nothing can be counted impossible, for it is the august scene of a ceaseless Divine activity. It would almost seem as if the world were created afresh every moment, for the *quanta* of action, the mysterious pulsations which constitute existence, appear to spring direct from the will of God. We may fitly say of them, as Abt Vogler says of the invisible vibrations which make up the world of music :

here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo,
they are !

It is a world, also, where the will of man counts, and may become really creative. It is not rigid but plastic, capable of taking on the impress of spirit to an unknown degree. There is, of necessity, a certain firmness in the framework, limiting the scope of man's activity, and frustrating the rebellious. But a great mistake was made when man's environment was conceived as a cast-iron frame within which frail mortals were imprisoned, and doomed to beat their wings against the bars. 'During the last three generations,' says Whitehead, 'the exclusive direction of attention to this aspect of things has been a disaster of the first magnitude.'³ Now we are learning to conceive of the environment as not utterly alien to the organism, but itself sensitive and responsive to a degree hitherto undreamed of. It is fluid, not rigid. Man in his environment is like a swimmer in the sea rather than a prisoner in a cage. The water bears the swimmer up and responds to his every motion. It has its own laws, and woe betide the swimmer who fails to obey them, for then the whole environment becomes an avalanche of destruction. But when the swimmer conforms to the laws and boldly uses them, then the whole environment conspires together for his help, bears him up and speeds him on. This would seem to open up tremendous possibilities of action to the spirit that is in tune with the universe and dares to draw on its resources. Does it not point in the direction of our Lord's great saying, 'All things are possible to him that believeth'?

¹ *Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 402-4.

² *ABC of Atoms*, 123-4.

³ *Science and the Modern World*, 295.

Entre Nous.

'Not servants, but friends.'

ONCE in every four years the Student Christian Movement holds a Conference. The last of these was held in January of this year at Liverpool. The note of the Conference was friendship—friendship as the only solution of industrial and interracial problems. As one of the speakers said, 'I think of André Siegfried's book, *America comes of Age*, where he concludes his stark chapter on the colour question in the southern States with the words: "The race problem is an abyss from which we shrink back in horror." I think of the verdict of one of the most eminent of modern historians, Rostovstev, who ends his brilliant study of the social and economic life of the Roman Empire by saying: "*Our* civilization will not last unless it be a civilization not of one class, but of the masses.'" Not only industrial and interracial relationships but also international relationships were constantly present in the minds of the members. 'I think, but need not speak of what even the professional soldiers are saying about a world still organized and organizing for war: armaments mean disaster, because war—of a scientific savagery yet undreamed of—is bound to come sooner or later where the conditions of that war exist. To put it at its lowest, the world's practical philosophy of human relationship is not only barbarous, it is dangerous; unless we can adopt and live by another philosophy, we are at our extremity.' How were these problems to be met? It could only be done by reducing them to problems in personal relations and by showing that the 'deepest need of the world is for some new power and hope in the realm of the spirit.' 'Not servants, but friends.' This is the new power and hope.

The addresses which were delivered at the Conference have been published under the title *The Purpose of God in the Life of the World* (S.C.M.; paper covers, 2s. 6d. net). The recently appointed Grote Professor of Philosophy in University College, London, Mr. John MacMurray, who puts his thoughts in a very fresh and stimulating way, spoke on the words, 'Ye are my friends.' 'We have been thinking too much in terms of service—service of God and of the world,' he said. 'But there is nothing distinctively Christian about service. Socrates called himself the servant of Apollo. The key-word of the Christian gospel is not service but friendship. "But, surely," you will say, "we

are called as Christians to serve Christ and to serve the world?" No! we are called to be the friends of Christ and the friends of men. That is not at all the same thing. Friendship often looks like service from the outside. So long as we stand on the earth, the earth going round the sun will look like the sun going round the earth. But when we take our stand at the centre of life with Jesus, the whole landscape is altered and service is swallowed up in friendship.'

There are two ideas which are bound up with service, but are not found in friendship, Mr. MacMurray says. These are duty and self-sacrifice. Duty fades right out of the picture in the Christian view of life. 'Suppose a friend came to see you when you were ill, would you be satisfied to know that he came because it was his duty to come? Would you not rather feel that the one thing needful was lacking? In friendship the personal things—warmth and intimacy of feeling—must be the springs of action. The cold impersonality of obligation is unprofitable. We shall not then be surprised by the quaintness of Christ's treatment of the idea of duty. "So likewise ye, when ye have done *all* those things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants: we have only done that which it was our duty to do.'" Only our whole duty! and Jesus calls that unprofitable service! It is because His view of life begins where duty ends, because Christian relationships are all intimate personal relationships. To fall short of that is to miss the one thing needful.'

And so with sacrifice. 'The more deep and real our friendships become, the more what looks like sacrifice from the outside is found to be the free and spontaneous expression of our own soul's necessity. If you discovered that a picture you had bought for an old song in a country curio shop was a priceless Old Master it would be ludicrous to say that you had *sacrificed* five shillings for it. In a perfect friendship, however, the word sacrifice is not merely ridiculous, it is just meaningless. In such a relationship what looks like giving what I value most is really getting what I most desire: the losing is the saving.'

'The fact is that in friendship we are beyond law and obedience, beyond rules and commandments, beyond all constraint, in a world of freedom. But did not Jesus say, "Ye are my friends *if* ye do whatsoever I command you"? Yes, He did.

We, on our side, are apt to miss the quiet humour of His paradoxes. "These are my commandments," He goes on, "that ye love one another." In other words, the friendship of Christ is realized in our friendships with one another.'

Do we make Christianity too easy a thing when we say it is the religion of friendship? But friendship is not easy. If we think it is easy we are confusing it with friendliness, Mr. MacMurray says, and friendliness is only a refined form of service. 'What men need from us is love, not loving acts; friendship, not friendly services. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not friendship, it profiteth me nothing"—just nothing. Friendship means losing ourselves, and that is apt to be a terrifying experience.' To be a friend means committing ourselves completely and revealing ourselves without reserve. 'It is to this dedication of themselves to friendship that the followers of Christ are called. Those who have the courage so to lose themselves discover with an ever-recurring surprise that in losing themselves they find themselves, and freedom. All of us know something of the freedom that comes—the tranquillity and self-realization that comes—when we slip from the company of strangers into the companionship of our intimate friends. . . . The purpose of God in the life of the world is simply the spreading and deepening of that experience until it covers the whole earth.'

The Formidableness of Jesus.

Dr. Bowie in a volume which he published in 1926—'The Inescapable Christ'—had a chapter on 'The Formidableness of Christ.'

In his latest volume of sermons, *The Inevitable Christ*, Dr. J. D. Jones has an address on the same subject. He tells us that he read Dr. Bowie's chapter and that this thought of the formidableness of Jesus had been with him ever since.

It is because there is a wonderful inclusiveness about Jesus that we can think of Him as the 'Gentle Jesus,' a gracious loving Person who went about doing good, and at the same time as the Person who proclaimed in such absolute terms the life and death authority of that spirit which He represented, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner. Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.' 'The men who listened to Jesus that day,' says Dr. Bowie, 'had no doubt as to what He meant,

and neither need we. . . . There is no escaping the ultimate spiritual authority. If any will not make God's purpose the foundation stone for all their living, then the stone becomes an avalanche grinding them to powder beneath its awful weight. That is a gigantic thing to claim.'

Jesus was formidable through His very goodness, Dr. Jones says. For goodness is always terrifying to evil men. 'Goodness condemns evil men by revealing themselves to themselves. That was the reason Mr. Live Loose gave for wishing to have Faithful put to death—"He would always be condemning my way."' There are many illustrations of this in the Gospels. One from the beginning of the Ministry might be cited: 'When at Nazareth Jesus turned round and faced the crowd on the brow of the hill, and none dared stretch out a hand to do him hurt.'

But the formidableness suggested by the words of the eighteenth verse of the twentieth chapter of Luke is a deeper and a more solemn formidableness. 'Things that come into collision with the mind and spirit of Christ are doomed because they are in conflict with those eternal forces and laws which express the working of God's purpose.' Jesus is formidable still to every system, every institution, that is not based on justice and truth. Is our present *social system*, asked Dr. Jones, whereby some are inordinately rich and some desperately poor, in accord with the spirit of Christ? If our *international relationships* are to be governed simply by regard for our own interests, our own rights, our own prestige, they are definitely anti-Christian. This is true of *individuals* also. 'It is not a matter of no concern what a man does with Jesus—it is a matter of infinite moment. We speak—and we act—as if it didn't matter very much whether a man accepted Christ or not. As a simple fact, it matters everything. If a man rejects Christ, he rejects goodness and purity and love, he chooses the base and the evil, and when he chooses the base and the evil, and rejects goodness and purity and love, he is setting himself against the eternal laws of the universe, he is setting himself against God. There can be only one result of such a choice—a broken and shattered life.'

War: A Moral Discipline.

'Speakers for the League of Nations know only too well that if you show on a lantern slide two alternative ways of settling an international dispute—either by a cavalry charge with horses plunging and men sabring one another or falling

dead under the hoofs, or by a conference of rather plain and bald old gentlemen reading papers to one another round a table—practically every young boy and girl in the room is secretly in favour of the cavalry charge. It is not that they want to kill, but they want to face death and peril. . . . I accept fully and frankly the position that strife or conflict is a necessary element in the building up of character, and indeed a necessary quality of life itself.

‘But must this strife take the form of actual fighting? ‘Judged even by the standard of war itself, the civilized man, accustomed all his life to peace, showed no deterioration. The London clerk was certainly no worse than the Sikh or Gurkha, the French *poilu* no worse than the Senegalese. Judged by almost any other standard of moral fortitude, I think he would come out better.

‘Consequently I do not think that there is any case to be made for the necessity of frequent fighting to modern men as a moral discipline. The moral discipline, for the majority of men who have to earn their own living, is there already. But furthermore, if such a moral discipline were really needed, I greatly doubt if modern war would give it. . . . War to-day provides comparatively little of that simple and clear-cut call to sacrifice which came as a matter of course to the ancient warrior facing death for his wife and his city. To the imaginative and highly intelligent, doubtless, the cause for which he faces death may remain present; but if so, a thousand other elements of experience will be present also whose effect will be to blur and blot out the element which once made the thought of war *dulce et decorum*. One friend of mine, after long stalking and hiding behind the stones of a churchyard, successfully shot dead a mild-looking middle-aged German, and found himself merely haunted by the thought that Christ had died equally for both of them. One, taking refuge from a hail of bullets in a cellar, in which there was only just room for himself and his own platoon, had to stand at the door keeping it barred against other bodies of French and English fugitives, shutting them out into the bullet-swept street. The things that had to be done became too obviously evil. One became too like a beast of prey, only more subtle and more relentless than other beasts.’¹

Point and Illustration.

A tribute to the memory of the late Dr. W. L. Watkinson takes the form of a collection of his

¹ Gilbert Murray, *The Ordeal of this Generation*, 27 f.

Sermon Illustrations (Sharp; 2s. 6d. net). It has been made by Mr. A. E. Salmon, a friend of Dr. Watkinson and a colleague in the ministry.

EXCITEMENT HARMFUL.

Some of the trees on the Thames Embankment cannot thrive because they are deprived of rest at night. Powerful electric lights take up the work when the sun sets, and the trees languish from arboreal insomnia. The light, not the kind of it, does the mischief, for electricity stimulates growth. The too-long-continued light causes the trees to languish, they need intervals of rest. And human life withers under abnormal stimulation; its best characteristics disappear, its blossoms are blighted, and its fruits are spoiled as by the caterpillar.

A NEW MAN IN CHRIST.

Professor J. Arthur Thomson, treating of the mutations and uplifts of Nature, writes thus: ‘We turn to Nature’s method of making extraordinarily new things out of very old things. For this is what has happened in a great number of cases where something apparently novel has emerged. The old is, as it were, recrystallized. The mineral becomes a jewel. . . . There is no doubt that to make an apparently very new thing out of a really very old thing is part of Nature’s magic.’ Shall we then say that the order of grace follows that of Nature, and that the new creature in Christ Jesus is an extraordinarily new being brought out of one old and familiar?

SPIRITUAL RECEPTIVITY.

Unless we have aspiration, faith, receptivity, the precious influences that encompass us are lost. The Sahara Desert is visited by tremendous rain-storms, but it is none the better for them; not a drop but descends in vain, for the heat evaporates the rain before the drops reach the sand. We may live in such an unsympathetic state that the rain and dew of heaven leave us unrefreshed and barren. ‘They all with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer’ until the power came upon them.

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